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# The North American Review

ONE-HUNDRED-SIXTEENTH YEAR

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# The Literary Landscape

By Herschel Brickell

The style, said a wise Frenchman a good many years ago, is the man. If this be true, and one suspects that it is, there may be detected a slight limp in the Landscaper's manner this month, attributable to a conflict with the Machine Age. Not many days ago the managing editor of The North American Review, himself busy mastering the intricacies of driving an automobile, said to the Landscaper that as he and your humble servant were perhaps the last two adult males in the United States to learn to handle cars, something might be written on the subject. This remark was made after the Landscaper had related one of the minor accidents of his own difficulties with a lot of horsepower on four wheels, which was simply this: Landscaper and car rolled gently down a steep hill around a sharp curve and fetched up in a flower bed and also in the midst of a most astonished tea party, the owner of the flower bed and the tea party having neglected to mark the road leading into his grounds with a sign indicating their somewhat private nature.

This was a situation not covered specifically by Emily Price Post, although from the manner of the invaded proprietor it was common enough to call for some comment from the people who know what is to be done in any circumstances. Fortunately the Landscaper managed to extricate himself from the flower bed and the tea party with no very grave damage to either; perhaps his self-respect was slightly wounded, but this is so common a tragedy that he has become fairly well inured to it. The cause of the possible limp, is, though, as the Spaniards say, *una otra cosa*. Without going into too many details, for automobile accidents are far too commonplace in this great and glorious republic of ours to merit much comment — Monday morning newspapers should suffice for those with a morbid interest in such matters — the Landscaper is willing to testify that there is something depressingly solid about a Connecticut stone wall, something immemorial, like an old oak tree. Struck at just the proper angle with a moving automobile, the results are interesting, if somewhat disagreeable. The lesson for today, my children, is to beware of soft shoulders on new concrete roads; they are treacherous, and should not be tampered with at a speed of more than five miles.

In the middle of one's aches and pains, however, there are some thoughts that arise, all of which no doubt have been thought by a good many other Americans, since nearly all members of our population have had the opportunity at one time or another to think them, if they were left able to think anything. First of all, there is the frightening suddenness with which a happy, sunny Sunday morning can take on an atmosphere of dark tragedy. The whole aspect of life can be changed in much less time than it takes to write a monosyllable on this typewriter. Second, there is something pleasant to remember in the kindness of contemporary good Samaritans, who do not even think of passing by on the other side, but who are not only willing to spoil their own Sunday mornings, but to go to any end to help their distressed fellows. Third, from this accident, at any rate, there is the other pleasant memory of a banker in a small town not too many miles away from New York who paused in the middle of a busy morning's work to relieve financial distress, after another banker had refused, and refused in a not especially agreeable manner, either. One expects kindness and efficiency when one comes to doctors and hospitals, nor is one often disappointed; the Landscaper is not one to worship the medical profession as a whole, but like the rest of the human race — or at least a very large part of it — he has to pocket his prejudices when there is trouble, and as often as not is left ashamed of them for a time, at least.

If the author of this department had not strayed many times from the subject of books, about which he is really supposed to write, to discuss every topic under heaven, he would feel like offering an apology for these random remarks, but after all the managing editor suggested that something might be said on the subject of learning to drive an automobile. There is a good deal to be said, and a good deal would have been said when the car rammed the stone wall already mentioned, except that it was all over before there was time

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for utterance. Unfortunately, it is not possible to carry over into this mad business of motor cars one of the first rules of horseback riding, which to this old-fashioned and very much dated American remains a pastime in every respect superior to scuttering about over crowded highways in company with millions of his fellow-beings, this rule being that when tossed from a horse, one must remount at once if alive, and keep the remounting up until man or horse gave in or passed out. The car was in no condition to be remounted after the collision. . . . Perhaps by the time this department is printed it will be running again with the same chauffeur, *Deo volente*, but it was not remounted at once. Indeed, if it had been a horse there would have been nothing to do but shoot it, but parts for this particular vehicle are made by a gentleman from Detroit who specializes in standardization, not by the Almighty, who worked things out on a slightly different plan. This is not meant for irreverence; the Landscaper quite frankly prefers the older method.

## *The Price War*

And now to our muttons, with only an occasional groan by way of a chorus. This is about the slackest time of year in the publishing business at best, and this year the books are scarcer because of the "price war," a good many of the older houses who still labor under the illusion — or delusion, if you like, that there is a difference between books of definite values and toothpastes and cigarettes of little or no value, having postponed some of their important summer volumes until the business of selling books has reached a more normal state. A large part of the existing upset is definitely psychological, which is not a statement by a politician, to be followed by the somewhat familiar saying that conditions are fundamentally sound. It is true that whatever comes out of the present effort to change the prices of books and to discover new outlets in those astonishing modern emporia, cigar stores and drug stores, what has happened already has been greatly exaggerated and greatly misunderstood. Part of the misunderstanding is directly attributable to careless reporting in New York newspapers, which, as always, went largely uncorrected after the facts had made themselves plain; part of it to comment by editorial writers who know as much about publishing as they do about the other topics upon which they comment — as an ex-member of the Editorial Writers' Union the Landscaper speaks freely and feelingly — and part of it to the downright panic with which a section of reputable publishing met the price changes. News of this sort inevitably radiates from New York, and whatever mistakes are made here are repeated from one end of the country to the other; a few brave souls stand out against the metropolitan tide of misinformation, but they are few. As matters stand, publishing firms, one large and old, another young and quite successful, are principally concerned in the price-reductions; two others are planning some experiments, and a few others are trying to cash in on the publicity. At least ninety per cent of the publishing business in the country is as yet unaffected in so far as price schedules are concerned, although there has been a sharp reduction in lists for the autumn, and a very wise one.

This cut will be carried over into next spring, so that we shall certainly have fewer, if not better, books, as a result of the price-cutting, although as a much more direct result of general business depression. Beginning authors will probably have to stand a reduction on royalty, and those bright young men who have been purchasing Rolls-Royces with the advances on their first novels will probably have to be content with cars such as the one the Landscaper tried to run through the stone wall in Connecticut. They are good enough cars, too, if any of the budding authors who read this department are concerned about the prospect; they just weren't intended to take the place of tanks. It is very tempting to continue this informal and somewhat disjointed discussion of the present publishing situation, but perhaps the public is already a little tired of it, and as the Landscaper has suggested before, it is not a simple subject or one that can be gone into with any thoroughness in a brief space. The Landscaper, donning his prophetical robes, and forgetting that he is usually wrong, is willing to predict, however, that within two years decent publishing will be in a better position in this country than it has since the bad years that followed the World War; that most of the racketeering elements in the business will vanish when the large and sudden profits depart, and further, that there will still be bookstores. . . . Even if Brentano's does have to adopt a patron's suggestion and put in a sodafount and a line of garden hose, stationary engines, airplane parts and cough-drops.

## *Available Fiction*

It has been a good while since the fiction shelf looked so deserted, but there are a few novels that deserve attention. This is as good a place as any to mention again Lady Eleanor Smith's circus story, *Red Wagon* (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.50), which is one of the most readable of recent novels, and one that really should not be passed by by anyone who likes the "big top." The Landscaper has read a good many better written novels in a long lifetime of fiction-reading, but of the contem-

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porary output he has read very few that were any more convincingly and entertainly done, any more sincerely felt. An unusual novel is Tiffany Thayer's *Thirteen Men* (Claude Kendall, $2.50) — the author himself calls it the damnedest book in the world, or words to that effect, wherein he flatters himself, to be sure, but it is worth a shelf full of the run of fiction, whatever its faults. It is probably selling as pornography, with the help of Mahlon Blaine's exotic illustrations, and Mr. Thayer's own frankness about sex, but this reviewer does not look upon the book as pornography. The author's intentions are serious enough, if his manner isn't, and after all there are ample precedents for the free-and-easy manner in which he tells the story. The novel concerns a jury and the defendant, and is built around the lives of these worthies. It is satirical in many of its implications, Rabelaisian, if you like, but what is more to the point, the book has vitality, and it is masculine. It is hardly necessary for the Landscaper to explain himself on this point to anyone who has read the praise of women novelists that appears regularly here, but there is room for Mr. Thayer's rougher vigor, too; in fact, present-day writing would do with a lot of it, the Sumners to the contrary notwithstanding.

There is some more satire in Joseph Anthony's novel in verse, *Casanova Jones* (Century, $2), Mr. Anthony having recently retired from publishing to do his duty to literature in another manner. Willy Pogany has supplied entertaining drawings, and before Mr. Anthony has finished his task, at least one round of shot has been fired into each of the current American foibles. The main target, however, is Prohibition. The Landscaper is sure we have all heard of the subject, Dr. William Lyon Phelps's recent suggestion that we all stop talking about it for a while having fallen on deaf ears. Usually Dr. Phelps's suggestions are practical, and they are all kindly meant, but this one is not practical, and would just about put social intercourse in the United States out of business. Not everyone can talk about backgammon yet, although before this ancient and honorable game finishes its present course, we may all be able to; but show me the man, woman or child in the United States who hasn't at least one bootlegging story to tell. . . . Even the Landscaper knows a few. As we were saying, Mr. Anthony's novel is about Prohibition, and if it isn't unfair to give away the point of the story, the whole question is solved by a Congressman's wife, who discovers that Prohibition is a religion, and can therefore be ignored or adored as one sees fit. Mr. Anthony's book is amusing in an inconsequential manner, and should find a place in the currently slack season.

A novel of solid values is Margaret Ayer Barnes's *Years of Grace* (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), Mrs. Barnes having made her début as a writer of short stories with *Prevailing Winds*, and having distinguished herself some time ago as author and co-author of successful plays. *Years of Grace* tells the story of the marriage of a Chicago girl, Jane Ward, to a proper Bostonian, and follows the history of four generations in America. It is done against a rich background and might almost be termed an historical novel of our own times, although it does not depend upon background for its interest, the story being well handled. This is too good a novel by too promising an author to be overlooked in the rush to the drugstores, although one feels that it probably will be neglected by a great many people who might enjoy it. It is a good bit too good for the dollar counters. . . .

Another novel that deals with us and our times is *Jackdaws Strut* by Harriet Harry (Morrow, $2.50), which is the tale of Stephanie Dale, a young girl on her own in New York, quite evidently done by someone who knows her subject, and written without any desire to shock. One feels that Miss Harry has drawn a true picture of a type that is perfectly familiar, entirely characteristic of our own age, and interesting from every angle. If not a novel of first importance, *Jackdaws Strut* deserves a high ranking in the second flight.

## *The Foreign Flavor*

Not much has come to us recently in translation, although there is available a new work by Ilya Ehrenbourg called *The Extraordinary Adventures of Julio Jurento* (Covici-Friede, $2.50), which will appeal to lovers of the curious in literature. This is a long and complicated satire on European affairs, done in a slightly mad Voltairean manner. Gustave Frenssen's *The Anvil* (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), is a long, important, and rather dull story of the last four decades in Germany. One is safe enough, perhaps, in saying that this is the sort of novel that ought to be translated because of the reputation of its author, and the valuation of the work itself by foreign critics, but there is small chance that any vast numbers of people are going to read it. The only other novel about is called *The Young Cromlech*, and it is by Hugh de Blacam (Century, $2), a story in the Donn Byrne manner about a lad and a lass in Ireland. At a glance, it looks as if it might serve very well for summer reading.

Before detective fiction passes into the hands of the cigar store people, and so far as this observer is concerned, they are welcome to it, we might mention a few titles that are handy, and which look as if they might be up to standard. Tyline

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Perry's *The Owner Lies Dead* (Covici-Friede, $2), concerns itself with the murder of a mine owner far below the ground; *The Melamare Mystery* by Maurice LeBlanc, carries on the adventures of Arsene Lupin and shows this redoubtable detective in love himself; and *The Piccadilly Ghost* by Erle Spencer (Macmillan, $2), as might be suspected, is about murder in London, and is not remotely related to the Cock Lane Ghost of Samuel Johnson's time; the Landscaper has tried for a glimpse of this latter worthy, but Cock Lane is now deserted. It may not be necessary to suggest that anyone in search of a lightish novel that makes no pretensions to literary merit need look no further than Alice Grant Rosman's latest contribution, *The Young and Secret* (Minton, Balch, $2), Mrs. Rosman having already pleased thousands of people with *The Window* and *Visitors to Hugo*. She has the secret of popular fiction that is respectably written and by no means to be scorned, since it is written for nothing more than entertainment. The new book seems to this observer to live up to its predecessors.

## *American Scene*

THE most arresting and able work of a biographical nature that has recently come to hand is James Truslow Adams's fine study *The Adams Family* (Little, Brown, $4), a recent selection of one of the book clubs, and a thoroughly engaging narrative of the clan that was founded by John and Abigail Adams, and which continues in the present Secretary of the Navy. John Quincy Adams, Francis Adams, Henry and John Quincy II, Charles Francis, Jr., and Brooks, are among the members of the family who have distinguished themselves; the record is certainly unequalled in American history, and the author has used his splendid knowledge of the story of this country for the background of his work. One suspects that no matter what books are forthcoming in the autumn, this volume will retain its relative importance. It should be of interest to every one who is really concerned with American phenomena. There are no other biographies at hand that demand attention; this is hardly an indication that we are finished with the vogue for life-stories, but is merely another indication of the dullness of the current weeks.

Another good book of American history is Samuel Eliot Morison's *Builders of the Bay Colony* (Houghton Mifflin, $5), one of the several important volumes published this year because of the Massachusetts tercentenary. Among the characters that troop through the pages of Mr. Morison's book are Captain John Smith, John White, Governor Winthrop, Thomas Shepard, Nathaniel Ward, Anne Bradstreet, Robert Child, Henry Dunster, and John Eliot, to mention only a few. Mr. Morison is also the author of *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*.

## *Knowledge and Skills*

OF BOOKS of a general nature that have passed this way recently one of the most interesting is Bernard Jaffe's *Crucibles* (Simon and Schuster, $5), the work for which Mr. Jaffe was awarded a prize of $7,500, and the Francis Bacon Medal for the Humanizing of Knowledge. In it Mr. Jaffe tells the story of the great chemists, and Dr. E. E. Slosson, whose recent death removed one of the most admirable of the American popularizers of scientific knowledge from our midst, left behind him the verdict that the book was "brilliantly written, full of interesting personalities, and with the necessary explanation deftly worked in with as few repellant technical terms as possible." *Crucibles* begins with Trevisan, who looked for gold in a dunghill, tells of Paracelsus, Becher, Priestley, Lavoisier, Dalton, and many others, coming as far down as Langmuir, who, in the words of the author, made us see the dance of the atoms. The author is a New York man; at present on the faculty of Girls Commercial High School in Brooklyn. He spent altogether four years on the work.

Another book that is scientific in nature and popular in interest is *Exploring for Plants* by David Fairchild (Macmillan, $5). It relates the adventures of a rambling botanist, who has searched the world over for plants, many of which have proved of great benefit to the human race. There are 190 illustrations, and the book is full of adventures, as it well might be. It should prove interesting to anyone, and unless the Landscaper's memory has gone wrong on such matters, especially so to older boys. It is a real contribution to an important subject.

Dean C. Worcester's standard volume on *The Philippines: Past and Present* has just been reissued by Macmillan in a new and revised edition at $6, with Ralston Hayden responsible for the changes; the large book has everything in it that any one might wish to know about our most important possessions in the Pacific. Meade Minnegerode has contributed another of his highly readable books in *Some Mariners of France* (Putman, $3.50), which tells the story of such worthies as Jean Bart of Dunkirk, and which is also a history of the maritime exploits of the French. Mr. Minnegerode writes in the most popular manner, which is another way of saying he writes with color and life, but he does not neglect his research, either, and a lot of digging into dusty town archives and little known documents went into the present volume.

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*Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*

# The North American Review

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# Prophet of Prohibition

BY RAY T. TUCKER

*The story of Dr. Clarence True Wilson, Field General of the Drys, who sees yet more sweeping reforms ahead*

DR. CLARENCE TRUE WILSON is, without a doubt, the most sensational moral and political reformer of the United States. There may be those who resent his manners and methods, but this quite pardonable prejudice can not obscure the fact that the pugnacious pulpiteer of the Board of Prohibition, Temperance and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church exercises an inestimable influence over his flock. If millions of Methodists, right or wrong, constitute the shock troops of the reform movement that produced the dry laws, the white-haired and blue-eyed clergyman with the silken goatee who marshalled their field forces in thirty-six States long before swivel-chair leaders capitalized his victories in Congress, deserves a prominent place in the non-alcoholic Valhalla.

As the Senate Lobby Committee recently disclosed, the late lamented Dr. Wayne B. Wheeler, while legislative representative of the National Anti-Saloon League, dominated Presidents, Cabinets, Congresses and political conventions. Nevertheless, it was Dr. Wilson who set the stage for Brother Wheeler to do his stuff. Though Wheeler may have beaten the politicians at the Capital, it was Wilson who beat the tom-toms among the people.

SINCE 1910, when he became executive secretary of the newly organized Methodist board, he has been scourging the saloon in every State of the Union. In the years when a Prohibitionist was a battered object of scorn and stones, he carried "the cause" into the highways and lowways of the West, and subsequently had the satisfaction of seeing twenty-six of the thirty-six States adopt Prohibition long before the nation succumbed. While Carrie Na-

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tion fought with a hatchet, Wilson warred against rum with his tongue and tracts.

Rigging up a gift automobile as a "Prohibition water-wagon" in 1912, he chugged out of Topeka, Kansas, his field headquarters, and for almost eight years he rode herd on a rotating troupe of speakers who barnstormed through lands then bathed in booze. In his *Adventures of a Street Campaigner* he says:

> My speeches were delivered from the rostrum of Methodist Conferences and university chapels, and from the pulpits of city and country churches. Some were made thousands of feet down under the earth in mines, many feet up in the air at mountainous points, in remote logging and fishing camps, on street corners and curbstones, on steam and sailing vessels, from automobiles, trucks and dry goods boxes. Some of the best were made from beer barrels, which, by the way, served as excellent pulpits. Standing on end, they took up very little room, gave correct elevation and were a picturesque symbol of the day when the beer industry would be trampled under the feet of civilization by Prohibition agitation such as ours.
>
> In Minnesota and Nebraska we have stood on a snow bank in the dead of winter and addressed Saturday afternoon throngs while a blizzard was raging. We have campaigned in the Golden West beneath genial sunshine and sped onward by soft breezes that made it a kind of heaven to go to heaven in. We have listened to loud hurrahs and storms of friendly handclaps; we have faced the scoffs, the scowls, the yells and the united threats of hostile mobs.

THE training acquired during these frontier experiences has obviously had a deep influence upon Dr. Wilson; it fortifies him in his present encounters with the ancient enemy. If he exhibits a weakness for sensational and unrestrained outbursts, it should be remembered that a beer barrel orator must think quickly and express himself forcibly if he is to hold and convince his crowd; he can not permit himself a pause for considered thought and sober statement. He must meet intemperance with intemperance, and he is lost who would be polite, parliamentary or punctilious. If, too, there appears to be a trace of the dissembler in him, it may undoubtedly be attributed to the days when he campaigned among rude folk who looked for edification as well as amusement to circus side-shows and itinerant medicine men. Then, as now, Dr. Wilson deemed it advisable to temper his tracts and his tongue to shorn mentalities and limited outlooks.

THOSE ten years of wandering warfare also spoiled him for settling down in Washington as the squatter guardian of our national morality. A nervous and fluttering gentleman, he must be ever on the march; not for him is the joyous job of talking to elected and appointive officials, although select subordinates undoubtedly devote themselves to this field of angelic activity. He is, preëminently, a Field General, a pulpiteer, a propagandist. Even now he spends five nights of every seven on the road, and during 1929, when he might have rested from his labors in view of the Prohibition triumph in 1928, he travelled 56,000 miles to invade thirty-eight States and deliver more than 500 addresses.

With an astuteness discernible at every turn in his career, he early hit upon the idea of engaging in debate with his enemies, in order that he might speak before unbelievers, and if he has not converted more than a

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handful, he has given them something and somebody to denounce. Denunciation, he philosophizes, is more desirable than disinterest. At the worst, he solaces himself with the thought that he has left with them a memory of a striking figure — one newspaper said "weird" — and proved that a Prohibitionist need not be a mild or mollycoddlish man, or even a judicious one. Indeed, those who listen carefully, or peruse his written works with some discernment, may conclude that Dr. Wilson, though publicly professing an aversion for an alliance between Church and State, yearns to strut the national stage as a Richelieu, a Bishop Matthew Simpson, or a Savonarola.

BEFORE the Senate Lobby Committee his able assistant, Deets Pickett, may devoutly deny that his lordly leader desires such a union, or thinks the Church should mingle in politics, but hear him as he exhorts the brethren in an unguarded moment. To the Southern California Methodist Conference in 1924 he said:

> We have overemphasized the separation of Church and State. A great deal of nonsense has been talked about how preachers should keep out of politics. Get into politics! If the forces of God — the saints — can't present as strong a lineup and wield as much influence as the forces of evil — the devils — there can't be much doubt of the outcome. We modern preachers are not priests. Jesus Christ was the last priest. We are prophets, the prophets of God, who plunge into every great battle, who mix into everything.

Dr. Wilson, it must be admitted in all sincerity, practises what he preaches. In his annual reports he repeatedly stresses the need for more laws to penalize the buyer of liquor, to make the first offense a prison penalty, to furnish additional funds for enforcement. "We have had practically no new legislation either to simplify or make more effective Prohibition enforcement in six years," he italicized in his 1926 report. In 1928 he lacked sufficiently purple language with which to call upon the church to demand dry planks in both party platforms and to crush any candidate who dared to advocate repeal or modification. He lists defeats of Wets as any tradesman would chalk up sales on the right side of the ledger, and he records setbacks to Drys on the opposite page. These policies he advocates from the pulpit and platform nightly, but always, he maintains, as a moralist rather than a politician.

ALTHOUGH he concedes that the Prohibition question has not been satisfactorily settled, he has already outlined an even more ambitious programme, which requires laws to outlaw the cigarette, to compel teaching of the Bible in the schools, to indigo the Sabbath, to prohibit prize-fighting, to clean up the motion pictures, to banish all forms of gambling, and to eliminate the "social evil." As if this were not a sufficiently elaborate project for a church which, he insists, holds aloof from politics and government, he would have it strive for laws withdrawing protection to Americans engaged in "unconstitutional traffic" abroad, compelling the use of the English language as the exclusive medium of education and publication, and, as a tail-end proposition, installing the direct primary, the initiative, the referendum and recall.

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Despite these prodigious demands, Dr. Wilson manages to maintain that neither he nor his church participate in politics, and Mr. Pickett, who appeared as his spokesman, apparently won the Lobby Committee to this view. To less naïve individuals than members of the Senate's inquisitorial body, however, it must seem that in this instance the Doctor dissembles. In this connection, it may be of interest to contrast his committee contention with his ideas as set forth in his remarkable biography of Bishop Simpson, who was Lincoln's close friend and adviser. It is clear that the Bishop is Dr. Wilson's great hero and model, and it is quite impossible for the biographer to conceal his envy of the political and personal influence which the Methodist of an earlier day possessed.

Bishop Simpson, Dr. Wilson informs us, served as Lincoln's substitute when the President was unable to fill speaking engagements, and was frequently summoned to the White House that his advice might be sought. Bishop Simpson, his worshipper notes, obtained the appointment of Stanton as Secretary of War, and subsequently as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Likewise the ecclesiastical influence was behind the nomination of Chase as Chief Justice, if Dr. Wilson is to be believed, and in Grant's controversies with officialdom, including those caused by his weakness for alcohol, the Bishop acted as the warrior's patron. Writes the latter-day Methodist:

> It is well known that Grant wound up as head of all our armies by appointment of this same man (Lincoln). How did it happen? Why, when Grant was in trouble, he always turned to his friend and relative, Matthew Simpson, for the parents of Grant's wife were in Simpson's first charge, and the name of the General was Ulysses Simpson Grant.

Dr. Wilson asserts that "every President from Lincoln to Garfield looked upon Bishop Simpson as a trusted friend and adviser." With the same words utilized by Wilson in demanding that the Government mobilize the Army and Navy to enforce Prohibition, the Bishop, according to his Boswell, urged Lincoln to emancipate the slaves. Simpson's words as recorded by Wilson were:

> We are doing many things now that in peace time would be unconstitutional. For instance, we are shooting down American citizens. The Constitution gives them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. When the Constitution is imperilled and a rebellion is on, the first right of the Constitution is self-preservation; and if granting freedom to the slaves would help to preserve the Constitution, I care not whether it goes over the Constitution, or around the Constitution, or under the Constitution, or through the Constitution. If it is to preserve the Constitution, it is constitutional.

This same attitude doubtless explains the Doctor's demand, as voiced in a magazine article, that the President "call out the Marines" to establish martial law in New York and Maryland, and thereby enforce Prohibition over the Federal and State constitutions and the prostrate bodies of "Nullifiers" Smith and Ritchie. For Dr. Wilson there is no difference between the crises of 1860 and 1930, between the preservation of the Constitution and Prohibition. Were he to have his way, the Marines would be transformed into a

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body of commuters between New York and all points wet.

Nor does he confine such inflammable advice to his magazine articles, his books, his reports, his speeches and his daily comments on Prohibition doings and desirabilities. Week by week, month by month and year by year such militant and extravagant suggestions issue from his G.H.Q. to members and ministers of the M. E. Church.

His board publishes a monthly bulletin known as *The Voice*, through which he sends warlike *communiqués* to 25,000 embattled evangelists. Its effect upon their thinking can hardly be estimated, although evidence of its detonative qualities may be heard on Sabbath mornings when the pulpit phalanx swings into action. Wilson also supervises publication of *The Clipsheet*, a compilation of dry claims and statistics, which is broadcast through 14,000 newspaper offices weekly. If it may be thought that editors are more discriminating than ministers, Dr. Wilson quickly dissipates this impression. In six months material from *The Clipsheet* was reprinted to the extent of 40,000 inches, and this, he hastens to enumerate, represents sufficient space to fill forty-six issues of an ordinary-sized newspaper, not to mention advertising value appraised at $100,000.

Thus he generates an undiminishing flow of Prohibition propaganda, supplemented, if necessary, by statements timed to meet changing conditions at all hours of the day and night. For if there is one public figure in Washington upon whom the correspondents can depend for headline comment, it is Dr. Wilson. Volstead he once ranked with Abraham Lincoln, and he characterized Mabel Walker Willebrandt as "that magnificent little woman who inspired the Jones law." In his expressed opinion, "Al Smith was as crooked a traitor as ever scuttled a ship of state." He has assailed every President since Taft, with the exception of Herbert Hoover, for indifference to Prohibition, and he once asserted that "though the Secretary of the Treasury is a Mellon, he is no watermelon." He even named poor Papa Stearns as "the sinister influence" which prevented Calvin Coolidge from neglecting all other Presidential problems for that of Prohibition enforcement. His only reaction to the life imprisonment sentence imposed on a mother of ten children for a one-pint sale of liquor was that "she should have been jailed before the birth of her first child"; and the dry agent who killed Mrs. Lillian de King while she was seeking help for her wounded husband should have been "commended rather than condemned," in his opinion. He first urged the Drys to "pack" *The Literary Digest* poll, on the ground that the Wets were stuffing the count, but second thought led him to give more ethical counsel.

His secret report declaring that the Pope had mobilized the nuns behind Mr. Smith's Presidential candidacy in order to elect a "son of the church" was too recently disclosed before the Lobby Committee to require repetition. He insists, however, that he was attacking "a Catholic wet and nullifier" rather than the Catholic Church, and he

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cites his political support of Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana in refutation of suggestions that he was animated by religious prejudice. He does not, nor do his friends, explain away his belittling of Dr. Henry Van Dyke for his part in the 1928 campaign, or his comment that Dr. Van Dyke's father was "a Presbyterian minister of the same stripe." A charitable interpretation, perhaps, is that these unfortunate utterances were due, in part, to the heat of battle in which they were made, and to his early training in the rough-and-tumble school of rabble-rousing rhetoric. Though privately he expresses regret at some of his excesses of speech, he condones them with the argument that a warrior on the field of Armageddon can not mince words:

> I am a fighter in the dry cause. That is my life, and it would be meaningless if I did not fight to win. If the question were settled, we would merely be amused at the fellow who went wet. But any one who leaves us now is a traitor, and any one who opposes us is an enemy, and I would be a Judas Iscariot if I did not try to strike him down, whether he be an "Al" Smith or a Dwight Morrow.

A SHRUG of his shoulders and a hard, dry laugh are his response to suggestions that he must grow weary of condemnation and isolation from the haunts of genial men:

> I have been defending Drys, dry laws, dry agents, dry officials, and dry principles for many years. Of course, I expect to be attacked. A man can't participate in a fight like this without hitting hard and being hit hard. But I would hate that the Biblical curse — "Woe unto ye when all men speak well of ye" — should fall upon me. I have no fear, though, that I will ever qualify for that.

Nevertheless, he has an engaging side. He is a man of distinguished presence, either on or off the platform; his snow-white hair, goatee and mustache, his baby-blue eyes and his peaches-and-cream complexion contrasting strangely with the red flame of "living fire" that consumes him. On the stump he impresses audiences as a polished speaker, even though he resorts to frequent and forcible gestures and permits his coat tails to fly about.

IT IS regrettable that the votes of visible and invisible listeners have gone against him in most instances, but it suffices for him that he obtains a hearing in the houses of the Philistines. As he warms up to his subject, a large gold cross dangles from his vest pocket, rimless glasses tremble on his nose, his face becomes flushed and the fiery words pour forth from between mustache and goatee. He presents a picture that commands attention, even though his arguments may not win agreement. Off the platform he discusses Prohibition a bit more sanely and sensibly, recognizing that it "was designed only to stop the public liquor traffic, while total abstinence is the remedy for the private drink habit." He has, for instance, conceived a great affection and admiration for his debating partner, Mr. Darrow, and he admits that the unbelieving lawyer would make an excellent preacher, "if soundly converted." For him "conversion" was the beginning of his Prohibition career, and therefore it is the beginning of all things.

Nevertheless, "conversion" did not come to him in the thunderous form in which it fell upon St. Paul

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on the road to Damascus. Though he was the son of a minister, and a member of the ninth generation of God-fearing English-Scotch-Irish settlers to be born in that part of Delaware which forms the eastern enclosure of Chesapeake Bay, he showed no inclination toward the church in early days.

His awakening came one night while he was riding past a country chapel on his way to an evening party; misgivings concerning his conduct beset him as he flicked his whip across the horse's broad back and asked, "Whither goest thou?" As always, action accompanied, or even anticipated, thought, and within a week he was delivering sermons in the rural churches round about. He attended St. John's College, an ancient and historic institution at Annapolis, until his health forced him to migrate to the Pacific Coast, where he completed his education at the University of Southern California and the McClay College of Theology. In 1904, when only thirty-two years old, he became pastor of the Grace Methodist Church in Portland, Oregon, and it was there that he entered upon his first Prohibition crusade in local and State contests. Despite pastorates in the East, it was in Oregon that he rose to the position of Superintendent of the State branch of the Anti-Saloon League, and it was from here that he was summoned to Chicago as secretary of the Methodist board on May Day, 1910. From that moment to this he has labored under no inspiration except "the cause."

So he can afford to smile at the taunts of his foes. He does not, for instance, worry over their jibes at the "Million Dollar Methodist palace," so "providentially" located across the plaza from the Capitol, and though he denies their assertions that it represents an expenditure of $1,000,000, insisting that it cost only $700,000, he informs the brethren in soul-stimulating messages that the former figure is correct. He will be forgiven, doubtless, for such well-intentioned dissembling since he has frequently found these tactics helpful. It is traceable to his beer-barrel period, perhaps, for it is reminiscent of the episode in which he challenged a jeering gang of factory workers to compare the callouses on their hands with his own. Telling of the incident to a Methodist audience years later, he added: "I am glad they didn't accept the challenge." There were, it seems, no callouses on the crusader's palms.

He can, belatedly, even smile at this example of childish charlatanism. For, sitting in his "palace" and poring over the blue prints of a $500,000 addition, he contemplates a country from which "legalized temptation" has been removed, and, as he suggested in his 1928 report, he rejoices at the election of "a Quaker President and a Methodist Vice-President."

Were it not that the "hounds of heaven" drive him ever onward, he might indulge his hobbies of spreading the simplified-spelling movement, of breeding fine cattle, of a bucolic existence on his Maryland farm, or compile his evidence, that John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's assas-

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sin, was not shot in a Virginia barn but escaped to live to a ripe old age in Enid, Oklahoma. These simple things this man of strangely mixed motives longs for, but he must, unfortunately, lay them aside until he has finally freed America of wet agitators, speakeasies, bathtub gin, the bare legs of chorus girls, high-low-jack-and-the-game, cigarettes, unnaturalized aliens, prize fights, and many other pressing evils.

## Sage

By Margaret Münsterberg

You have but little beauty, tiny flower,
And if you have a perfume, it is faint.
My foot has almost crushed you as you cower
Beneath the towering grasses — humbly quaint.

I wonder, were you gone, if I should miss you,
Your purple-bluish petals in the field?
Yet I believe the butterfly must kiss you,
And that your blossoms, too, sweet honey yield.

I know a life, like yours, so quaintly humble,
With little beauty for the careless eye,
And almost unperceived until you stumble
Upon a bit of kindness, passing by —

A life that seems monotonous and lonely.
Yet I believe that when its breath is spent,
This earth will be the poorer far, if only
One heart will miss the faint and sage-like scent.

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# She Gets the Job

By Catharine Brody

*Comparing the girl's opportunities in the modern business world with the boy's*

There was one short period in a life of toil and pessimism when I almost succumbed to that illusion of American womanhood marching upward and onward, which no hoariness of age seems to stale and no amount of denial to wither. It happened some six years ago. A newspaper had sent me to twenty cities and towns through the country to learn whether or not an unskilled girl, without family, friends or money could easily get work to do. Upon a day, therefore, in the course of my wanderings, I found myself in the employment office of a Philadelphia department store, in the midst of a group of girls and boys in their teens. One glance — and the exhilarating quality of that illusion went to my head.

There was no comparison between the girls and the boys. The former were nearly all attractively dressed, facing the world with some confidence, even the little messenger girls, in contrast to the very awkward and adolescent boys of their own age. To see the latter fumbling with their application blanks, stumbling all over each other on four, six, it seemed eight legs, to hear them stammering their inquiries at the information desk, to watch them being unceremoniously ordered here and there, was calculated to make even a member of the competing sex feel a twinge of pity. In the mean time, the girls walked briskly in and out of the employment office; smiling and poised, they conferred with the manager. They were not afraid to ask questions about work and pay, while they were answering questions as to their fitness. And if the answers did not suit them, as I learned from later conversations, they did not hesitate to jerk thumbs down. It was in this store that a co-worker informed me, "It's easy for a girl to get jobs around here; it's hard for a man because he knows he has to stick, but if a girl doesn't like her job, why she can go round the corner and get another one."

This attitude, amounting to a toss of the head in the face of the world, became more and more apparent and more and more heartening as I travelled on. It was no red-letter year. Times were good in some parts of the country and very bad in others. The seasons of the year — fall,

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winter and very early spring — seemed to be favorable to job-hunting in the East and South and more and more unfavorable as one went to the West and North. But everywhere these girls I met — who were generally in their teens — kept their air of assurance, a certain consciousness that they were young and neat and often pretty, a certain feeling that they would get quarter.

INDEED, it seemed that they were justified. My reception in most factories, accustomed as I was to periods of desperate job-hunting among newspapers, left me flabbergasted. I was needed. I was wanted. Why, even in Detroit, in the slack inventory-taking time, hadn't I, the only girl, been immediately picked out of a crowd of boys and men to master the simple and very monotonous business of pinning together the frames for automobile cushions? I did feel so sorry for the tow-headed boys and the heavy-handed men who waited in such helpless awareness that they could hardly hope to appeal to the dramatic instincts of the community as did the poor little working-girl. Heaven will protect her — I remembered the prophecy. Nothing was said about him.

Whether it is actually easier, in normal times, for the unskilled or semi-skilled girl to get a start in the working world, as compared with the boy of her age, seems to be a question which can be answered only by opinions and general impressions. The best figures available are those compiled by Claire Lewis, head of the Junior Placement Bureau of the New York State Department of Labor; but these hardly form an accurate basis for a review of the country as a whole, since New York ranks high among the States with protective labor legislation, laws which automatically discriminate against girls in some occupations.

AN EXAMINATION of Miss Lewis's report for three months of the current year shows that the boy of from fourteen to eighteen had a better chance to get the job. However, his chance was only about eleven per cent better on the average, and the figures do not include either the boy or girl of eighteen nor are their comparisons extant for the latter teens. This leaves some room for doubt, for though it is agreed that the girl of from fourteen to sixteen in this State, certainly, is a problem for the employment bureaus, while the boys of such ages can be placed as office, errand and messenger boys, the handicap on the girl's side is lessened after sixteen and in the case of one employment bureau, that of the Heckscher Foundation, the shoe seems to be decidedly on the other foot. Edith Odes, the head of this bureau, which deals with a specialized group of juniors, says that it is the boy of seventeen and eighteen, the boy too old for errand work but without trade or training, who is her particular problem, while the girl of the same age, proportionately more mature, often with a longer period of schooling to her credit and more varied skills, is fifty per cent easier to find work for.

Throughout the country, it is my impression, from my own experience and from the attitude of the numerous unskilled and semi-skilled girls with whom I worked and hunted for

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work, that they normally get a foothold, albeit a most unstable one, in the working world with less trouble than the boys. Girls are preferred in factories wherever there is any chance that they can do the work and particularly where they are not safeguarded as to hours, conditions and age — there seems to be no doubt of that. Girls are preferred in all the lesser-paid forms of clerical work and, of course, in domestic service, though no inexperienced girl need think that she is going to be at all popular with housewives. To the adolescent boy of this class are left the trades (and the girls have a few of their own such as millinery, dressmaking, beauty shop work), errand boy jobs of one sort or another — in New York State half of the jobs available to boys through the Junior Service call for work of this sort, while half of the jobs open to girls are in factories — the exclusively male industries, machine shops, foundries, etc., and all the forms of rougher labor where the hours may be longer than they are for girls.

THE most striking point, in view of what happens later, is that in earning power boy and girl start even. There appears to be no dispute about that. In New York State each gets a beginner's wage of from eight to twelve dollars a week, depending on the district and on whether times are good or bad. I gather that wages for the comparatively unskilled have not changed since my time, so, from my own observation, I might add that these are good average rates for the country. Except as a servant, nowhere, not even in the South, was I offered less than eight dollars a week, and in only three instances more than twelve.

Even in the better educated groups, those of college boys and girls, there is no marked economic difference at the start. As nearly as I can find out, each sex gets much the same pay, from twenty to twenty-five dollars a week. Some college graduates earn more, no doubt, to begin with, and lucky they are, too; but these are average salaries.

AS FAR as opportunities are concerned, the girl of this class feels the first premonition of that cold air of which she is going to get such large quantities later on. To be sure, she has what amounts to a monopoly of some professions, of nursing, for instance, of teaching in the elementary grades. A college graduate with stenography is no white elephant in employment offices. On the other hand, one hardly needs to point out all the doors which she will have to pry open with a jimmy and many in which even the jimmy won't work. These factories, for instance, which are so hospitable to girls — what use have they for the feminine college graduate? The stock answer to this question is that she isn't willing to "start at the bottom" like her brother and learn the business. But what provision has been made for her to do so? One reads very encouraging stories from time to time of girls who have donned the figurative overalls, gone to work in factories and taken the steps of the ladder two at a time; but unfortunately these are all fiction stories. My own idea is that if a college girl did wish to undertake one of the endless pasting and pinning and pressing and picking jobs

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relegated to women in factories, she would have to lie her head off in the first place to avert suspicion, and that, even if she advanced to the high estate of handling a machine at a piece work rate, she would still come out at the same door as that in which she went. It doesn't seem to be an unusual idea. When I asked Lucy Connor, National Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., whether, in the course of her visits through the country, she had ever stumbled upon any of these wondrous up-from-the-ranks-to-the-top-of-the-factory college girls of fiction, she just laughed.

It is with precisely that sort of hearty laughter that I now regard my own deluded sympathy with the poor, gangling, helpless-seeming male of the species in his teens. He may not be so sure of himself as the girls, he may take whatever offers while the girls know what they want, grimace at factory work and demand clerical; he may have no advantage at the start either in pay or in the chance for a job. Nevertheless, in ten years' time it will be these girls one must feel sorry for, and the older they grow the sorrier one must feel. Their briskness and brightness can't fool anyone who has seen and is seeing them ten, fifteen, twenty years later. They may be marching upward and onward. From where I stand, however, it looks more as if they were marching round and round.

A decade later, what becomes of these brave, bold, independent damsels — the little Polish fifteen-year-olds who flung on cheap fur coats over their stained overalls and swaggered down the road away from the automobile accessories factory in Detroit; the bored working-girls in the Baltimore underwear shop, one of whom cheerfully informed the employment manager in my presence that "No, of course, she didn't work every day"; the pretty girls in the Boston shoe factories who made eyes at the boys across the streets, then turned and giggled among themselves, "The fools! The saps!" So many of them said, very seriously, "A woman has it worse when she marries." But, of course, the great majority of them do marry, and they marry sooner than the white-collar girl, possibly because the men of their economic class reach their best earning powers at the earlier and more susceptible ages.

Between the very early twenties and the late, there seems to be a peculiar hiatus among factory girls. Nineteen is a very common age in factories, so are twenty and twenty-one, but it used to amaze me to see how few of the girls who worked with me, judging by looks as well as by admissions, were in the middle twenties. The latter ages, it would appear, cover the years when they stay out, married, getting supported, bearing children. In the near-thirties they begin to drift back to the factories — sometimes only for the autumn months "to buy things for the children's Christmas," sometimes only for a few years, "to save money for a home," but more and more often, indefinitely, because their husbands can't get work or because they've been separated or divorced or widowed and have to support themselves and their children. Therefore, in a decade, those who have not been able to withdraw

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absolutely from the world of the pay envelope are back exactly where they started from, doing more or less the same work at more or less the same pay, from an average of fifteen dollars weekly to a high rate of twenty-five, and with two jobs to hold down instead of one — an unpaid job at home as well as the job in the factory.

I remember a foreman in Troy who, in the process of painting for me in glowing colors my opportunities as a shirt-presser — some foremen even felt it necessary to tempt me thus — inadvertently let slip a scornful comparison between the earnings of men and women. There was one among the small group of male pressers, he said, who made as much as forty dollars a week, but none of the large group of women had ever made so much: "One woman makes thirty dollars a week, but she's an exception." What he forgot to mention, what I learned for myself afterwards, was that perhaps not a single woman in the room could give her entire energy to the business of pressing shirts for a living. Most of the women were married and washed, cooked and cleaned at night; some of them had children and had to add the job of being a mother to their other duties; even the unmarried ones helped with the housework.

IT IS trite to repeat that, though the girls had an equal start, a decade later they are earning less. From a recent investigation of the National Industrial Conference Board in twenty-five lines of work, one gathers that factory women earn a median wage at least twenty-five per cent lower than the wage of unskilled men. The only position to which women can, as a rule, hope to rise in the factories, is that of forelady. I have heard of foreladies who earned as much as forty dollars a week — when not laid off. Most factory earnings, of course, are very sensitive to lay-offs and seasons.

AND what happens to those girls who clamor for clerical work, jobs in stores, who are not only insistent upon keeping their white collars ungrimed but who really appear to be sensible in their choice, considering the slight chances for advancement in the factories? The righteous little Southern girls with whom I clerked in a Birmingham five and ten cent store; the telephone girls with whom I trained in Kansas City; the girls with whom I fished for advertisements in San Francisco; my roommate in Cleveland who was an usher, and further back than that, the girls with whom I typed form letters in an office in New York City — what becomes of them? A few may rise to the heights of a profession. Otherwise, if they are lucky and highly expert, they are holding down jobs that pay at the very most fifty dollars a week — thirty-five would be much nearer the mark. In nearly all branches of clerical work the men are paid more than the women, often a good deal more. Concluding its study of these workers four years ago, the National Industrial Conference Board neatly, if unconsciously, summarized the whole situation in regard to women's salaries. After pointing out that in the highest paid group for each clerical occupation, the percentages of all the women employed were, with one exception,

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smaller than those for men, the report explained that in the case of file clerks the two percentages were approximately the same, "which would appear to indicate a special adaptability on the part of women for this particular type of work." In other words those women who hope to reach equal earning power with men must be not merely equally good but better.

As for those white-collar girls who marry, more and more of them are returning to what they call "business," and if they do so, they are in the same position as their factory sisters. They are two-job women on half-pay dividing their energy between home and office, for, if they do not literally cook the dinner after work (a great many do) and clean the apartment, all the details of a household devolve upon them, and that is no mean burden.

Nor are their futures, so far as business advancement is concerned, much more hopeful. From below they are pressed by the hordes of girls, the annual high school quota and others, who want office jobs and nothing else; for the better positions, such as that of secretary, college girls have the advantage, and the very best jobs, head clerk, head bookkeeper, office manager, etc., are mostly relegated to men.

STENOGRAPHY used to be considered the best stepping-stone to a career — for a girl — but that was in the days of old when an office afforded a much better chance for initiative on the part of the employee and personal choice and judgment on the part of the employer. This basis for a future, it seems, is being destroyed. Technical changes, the introduction of new mechanisms, do not appear to have affected the factory women as much as they have the clerical workers, perhaps because the latter were much more accustomed to the security of a definite weekly wage and the less impersonal treatment.

MARGARET WILLIAMSON, National Business and Professional Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., paints a gloomy picture, particularly at present when there is so much unemployment. Older, experienced girls are being discharged in favor of youngsters who can handle uncanny new machines just as well. Central stenographic offices are set up where the workers either circulate among the executives of a company or transcribe from dictophone records and have, therefore, as little chance of learning the business or forming helpful connections as workers in a factory. She tells of the idea new to business girls of payment by production, piece work — in other words, dictophone operators paid by the cylinder, bill clerks by the number of invoices, typewriters being equipped with cyclometers and the typists being paid a base rate with the remainder dependent on the number of "points" recorded by the cyclometer. This trend toward mechanization and standardization is, according to Miss Williamson, rather more pronounced so far in the Middle West and, of course, it probably will not be practicable for the small office. At the same time it is transforming the work and the hopes of many women and is leading to an increasing maladjustment in jobs.

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Men feel the pinch of the shoe, also, but one must remember their higher salaries and the generally accepted theory that among them will be found the stuff for promotion. In spite of all the wives and children men are supposed to be supporting (no one ever takes into account the parents, disabled relatives, younger sisters and brothers, children and even husbands whom women are supporting), they have much the better chance to provide for themselves. The amount of money which these women can put by out of their salaries is something pitiful. I know one who has been working for twenty-five years, quite steadily, and has risen very high up to one of the fifty-a-week-jobs. All she has to show for it is two thousand dollars painfully accumulated in the bank.

And what becomes of them in the professions? This drives home so close to me that I hate to say. To see the smart parade of girls and women in restaurants that specialized groups of them frequent, one would think that they owned the world. Women triumphant! Yes, indeed, completely triumphant from the business-like brief-case or envelope or portfolio she carries to the trim and completely fashionable hat she wears, to her sleek stockings and the shoes that must match her costume. Alas! this appearance of prosperity and dominance is just her stock in trade; it is like the affluent show window of one of those tiny shops which one enters only to find that all the merchandise has been displayed in the window.

One is struck by the special sort of gloss which covers so many of these better-class working women, these more or less professional women, in the later twenties — a sort of mask of hardness and alertness superimposed on scrupulous grooming. This mask is becoming almost a type-mark of young women who "get around a lot," who are much in evidence and whom one would consider successful. They seem much superior to the men of their age and class. The women make much the better appearance, they seem to be much more brisk, much more intent on their jobs — much too intent, in fact — and they work like demons. When they are aggressive, and they often are, their aggressiveness and persistence are frightening. They are "go-getterettes," but they should not be confused with the male "go-getter." They have no spirit of get-together, no blandness; tact and shrewdness, perhaps, but no cheerful suavity of demeanor. They are made of sterner stuff because they have learned that in order simply to be as successful, they must be more in every way than the men. They must be harder than nails, they must be hard as diamonds. They must be more grasping, more calculating, more determined. Even in order to be less successful, they must be more in every way.

The best example of the type, to my mind, is found among the stylists, with advertising women a close second — professions in which one would imagine women stood more than an equal chance. Unfortunately, plenty of men have no objection to designing, describing and manufacturing articles to be sold to women, though they might object to

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women's so much as purchasing neckties for them. And besides the competition of the men there is also the competition of the armies of their own sex who naturally prefer the doors which are wider open to those just ajar or completely barred. It often seems as if all the smart young women were trying to do some form of writing or drawing or acting.

In some branches of the artistic or pseudo-artistic professions, women are burdened with no handicaps. In many others the doors begin to bang almost as soon as they have been pried open. An example that springs to mind immediately is newspaper work, one of the most backward and unfair trades in that respect.

I remember that when I had had five years' experience on papers in and out of New York and had just completed for one of them a series of articles which attracted sufficient attention to bring compliments from the editor, there was a question of rewarding me by taking me back on the staff. This the editor did not care to do, but when I was leaving he kindly inquired: "Do you know stenography? I think I could find you some secretarial work!"

Experiences like this are a great deal more responsible for those much-published neuroses among women than the sentimental potpourri of causes usually set forth. I, myself, because of this incident, am marred for life by a dreadful repressed desire. For, unfortunately, it was not possible to obey one's natural instinct and shoot the editor.

Some professional women have done well. In the majority of cases the mask of prosperity hides the fact that they are not doing nearly as well as their male competitors, though way down at the bottom boys and girls start at the same pay and with greater self-confidence on the part of the girls. Three thousand a year is no particular mark of distinction so far as men are concerned, but a woman who earns that amount on a job feels a sense of accomplishment. When she earns five thousand, she might as well call it a day, unless she is a super-woman, a very Colossus of her sex. I know numbers of girls who make so much and some of them reached this position of affluence quite early in their careers — five years after leaving college, perhaps. But no matter how little or how often they may change jobs thereafter, their salaries remain at about the same level. And when a woman makes fifteen thousand a year, she is certain to get her pictures in the papers at one time or another.

The actual money earned by many women who are pointed to with pride, particularly by the newspapers, as having broken into professions usually closed to their sex, is often ridiculous. Of course, in the process of individual bargaining, men and women of this class find it wiser to exaggerate their salaries, so it is difficult to be precise on the subject. But a year ago there was a great hullabaloo in the papers about a woman whom I happened to know well, one of the very few women and one of the best known in a certain dominantly masculine business. She had worked for a very wealthy firm for about thirty years, worked with an irritating loyalty considering the

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treatment meted out to her, and so conscientiously that she was on the verge of a breakdown. If money talks, her pay envelope certainly did not join in the general fanfare of wonder and admiration, It held just a hundred dollars every week. There was no question of her mind, her education or her value to the firm. Neither was there any question of her being offered a partnership. Also, she had to stay on her job, for it would have been too difficult to obtain another one in the same field.

On the surface, the records of applicants and placements of the New York State Department of Labor for the first four months of this year — a time of critical unemployment — show that women did have the better of it. A higher percentage of them were able to "find something to do," in the winter months a much higher percentage. Only, here is the catch: the percentage jumps ahead for women because of "day work," fragmentary jobs of cleaning and cooking and scrubbing. When one comes to consider the earning power of these women who found "something to do" more readily, that is another story. The Manhattan office of the State Labor Bureau has embarked on an analysis of the wages of the men and women placed from the first of January to the first of May in the current year. The first fact it uncovered was that among the men, ninety-seven were to get paid from thirty dollars a week up, while the women to be paid twenty-five a week or more amounted to exactly six. The highest salary among the men, mostly men with trades, was seventy-five dollars, that of an engineer; the highest paid woman was a statistical clerk at forty dollars a week. Keeping in mind the probability that highly skilled women, generally of the white collar and professional class, are less likely to apply to the State employment office, it is still interesting to figure out the low wages earned by this higher percentage of women who did obtain some sort of work and hard work, too — scrubbing floors is no joke.

I know of no research as to whether the men or the women are more likely to find employment, disregarding wages, in normal times, so there would appear to be plenty of room for surmise. It is my opinion that, normally, women on the whole are at no disadvantage and, in some lines, may even have the advantage, so far as merely getting work is concerned, up to a certain point. Arbitrarily, I should set that point at the fifty dollar a week job — rather high, too. In other words, the lower the wage or salary (always excepting certain occupations for which women are not fitted and others on which they have so far made no impression) the easier it is for a woman to get the job.

The handicap of the average woman, it seems to me, is not lack of ability in general but an inability to plan her whole life in relation to herself and only to herself. It is not that marriage or even motherhood definitely interferes — the unmarried woman has no longer the illusion that a wedding ring necessarily means support, and the married woman knows too many friends divorced and obliged to reënter the working world or leaving their chil-

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dren in the care of relatives or nurses and marching back to factory and office. But few women can really believe and fewer still like to think that they will have to work all their lives. Something, some vague something, must happen — their husbands may be able to support them in time, or they may remarry, or they may meet eligible millionaires — or — oh, something will rescue them. It is noticeable how even in the "modern" books of contemporary women writers of the supposedly most emancipated variety, the books by ex-wives and black sheep, the happy ending of marriage to a rich man and, one presumes, a good provider, is tacked on as a sort of wish fulfillment, for the reality is very different.

THE subconscious realism that lingers on in women quite apart from their actions or their philosophies causes them to take a skeptical attitude toward the whole helter-skelter business of making a living. One can hardly blame them. And then, most women still lack sufficient egotism to delude themselves with the idea that the world revolves around them and their work. They can't really feel that to become a master mortician or a master builder or a master realtor will move the stars one jot or tittle from their courses. Not even the "go-getterette" can feel that for she, as a rule, is only a poor imitation of the male ego, her assurance only a topcoat to cover all sorts of economic fears which men, with their sense of importance, take much more lightly.

Many other subtle disadvantages thwart the woman who works instead of waiting and weeping. Even the superficial business of being a woman is much more complicated than the business of being a man. The energy spent merely in washing out and mending silk stockings, for instance, if harnessed to a power machine would probably turn out goodness knows how many automobiles per hour or furnish electricity for goodness knows how many cities. It takes little effort for a man to look after himself and keep his clothes decent, when his loving wife or mother or the laundry doesn't do it for him, but the efforts women are obliged to make to keep themselves as attractive as possible are terrific. I don't mean that they must be seductive in order to get work, but it is absolutely essential for them to look as well as they can. After all, it is still chiefly men to whom they must apply for jobs. Even when men do not do the actual hiring, employees are often chosen with reference to some man or men higher up, the foreman, the head of the department. One girl who has charge of employment in her office told me that she always hired blondes for the information desk because she understood that men preferred them and the firm had to make a good impression on the men who came there!

THEN — and this looms large among the reasons why women mark time — a man acquires concrete objects to provide him with the necessary incentive-power, a wife, a home, a family. Women, who, as I have pointed out, retain certain cynical doubts as to the rewards of toil, need concrete flesh-and-blood to work for much more than men, but their dependents are apt to be of

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what one may call the obstructive rather than the constructive variety. It is not customary to work to support one's husband and when it's done, according to the confessions of the female providers, the husband by no means furnishes the admiring helpmate quality. That is why divorcees and widows, with children to support, so often make extremely successful business women — the children furnish an unquestionable stimulus. One of the shining examples in that respect, one of the very few feminine capitalists in her own right and by her own efforts, was left a widow with two children.

However, some hope lies in the fact that a new sort of feminism seems to be growing up from sheer necessity. There is an incipient *sub rosa* alliance among women, particularly professional women, who must work and expect to keep on working — the same sort of alliance in force among men, for the purpose of helping each other, lending each other money, getting each other jobs, putting things in each other's way and most important of all, for the women's standpoint, of keeping up each other's courage. And perhaps the difficulties of gold-digging, of getting alimony and of obtaining suitable support will in time become acute enough to force women to plan their lives from beginning to end as self-sustaining human beings.

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# Mother Catherine's Castor Oil

By Edward Laroque Tinker

*Visiting the High Priestess of a Negro Cult in New Orleans*

Out beyond the Industrial Canal, where the cypress swamp meets the New Orleans city limits, is Mother Catherine's Church of the Innocent Blood. It stands in the centre of a wilderness laid out by realtors and tenanted only by broken-down mules and a few thin, grazing cattle. The roads leading to it are deeply rutted and full of great holes. After one of the frequent tropical torrents they are impassable and the "manger," as the members call their church, wallows in a sea of mud.

Roofs of rambling buildings showed above a high board fence, and white pennants, streaming from their peaks, gave the place a festive air — made it look like a miniature county fair-ground. As we approached, weird singing became audible, punctuated regularly by thumps on a big drum. Skirting the whitewashed fence we reached the board gate. It was locked, but at our knock a black eye appraised us through a small hole.

Evidently we were considered innocuous, for we were admitted by one of Mother Catherine's apostles, a gingerbread Negro dressed in a white "cover-all" not unlike those worn by surgeons when operating. One sleeve was embroidered with a band of cabalistic characters, and on his head was a small tight cap like a misplaced tonsure. Another apostle joined him and told us, apologetically, that one of Mother Catherine's rules was that gentlemen must be searched for firearms and knives, and "all sich" must be left at the gate. Politely they "frisked" us and, finding no weapons, we were ushered into the chapel, the "startin' of de manger," whose door stood open before us.

It was a frame building of scrupulous cleanliness. A *bénitier* faced the entrance and, dipping his fingers into the water, our apostle made the sign of the Cross. Crudely constructed narrow benches filled the body of the church and, in a small alcove at the right, towered the figure of a bizarre, black Jesus, superhuman in size. It had a gaping red wound in its side, and our guide explained that "sence de Bible didn' specify He was white, we gin Him us color." Strangely enough the accidental deformations due to lack of craft-training on the part of its maker gave an emotional reaction akin to that received from the intentional

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distortions of some modern sculptors.

The small square windows of the chapel were hung with cheap white material, crudely embroidered with Biblical characters and incidents done in colored thread. They were naïvely interesting and had all the directness and simplicity of peasant art. Spanish moss festooned the exposed rafters, and before the lace-covered altar were tiers of unlighted candles in a multiple brass standard whose base was covered by a mound of sand as a fire protection. To the left stood a large table with rows upon rows of glass kerosene lamps, whose bulging chimneys were clean and shining. The apostle explained that, for a small donation, we might choose a candle or, for a trifle more, a lamp and make a wish on it, and that Mother Catherine would light it and say a prayer that would result "mos' ginnelly" in causing our desires to be fulfilled.

Later, we were informed, the lamps and candles were never actually lighted. They burned spiritually, not materially — a symbolism possessing economic advantages. It was quite evident that Mother Catherine, inspired by the strength of the Roman Catholic Church, had borrowed generously of its ritual.

Soon a small black acolyte arrived and announced that the high priestess was ready to receive us, and we went out by a side entrance upon a balcony at whose end loomed a colossal image, vaguely human in outline. It was *teinte pomme cuite*, as the Creole Negroes describe "high yaller," and seemed made of clay surfaced with burlap to prevent cracking and erosion. Two terrible arms stretched out in ghoulish benediction and, in spite of the rosaries which dripped from its long, bologna-like fingers as silent symbols of its conversion to Christianity, it gave the impression of some monstrous heathen idol, implacably awaiting a human sacrifice. In the reassuring light of a sunny afternoon it looked terrible enough, but it must have been truly awe-inspiring by moonlight, when Mother Catherine held her nocturnal services lasting from midnight to dawn.

We went down some wooden steps and walked, like a file of ducklings, along a double row of cypress boards across a wide yard of sun-baked mud. Passing a pigmy pool of yellowish water from which arose an abandoned well-diggers' scaffold, we learned that this was the "Sea of Gethsemane," and that Mother Catherine had not been satisfied when the diggers struck fresh water. Only a salt liquid could properly typify the tears of Christ, so the work was going on until brackish water should be obtained. She intends to line the "Sea" with "lead an' copper an' all de precious stuff," and use it as a font in which to baptize the faithful.

The sound of whining sing-song voices, accentuated by rhythmic drum-beats having all the savage insistence of a Haitian *bamboula* calling votaries to Voodoo worship, increased in volume as we approached a large pavilion-like structure, with permanent top and striped canvas sides, which stretched across one end of the enclosure.

At the entrance we were stopped by a young Negress dressed in a

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white robe. A green veil, covering her head and falling to her shoulders, was kept in place by a white fillet, on which was embroidered I AM HOLTED.

She sprinkled a little salt in each one's palm, telling us to swallow it and make a wish on Mother Catherine, for it would "sho' come true."

In return for this blanket promise we slipped a coin in the child's bank obviously exposed on the table beside her, and made our way to the line of backless board benches. The music continued insistently, the savage thudding of the tom-tom in queer contrast to the peaceful picture presented by the bedraggled chickens which picked the ground near our feet, the nondescript puppy that sniffed our heels, and the incubator on our right which seemed to be imperturbably fulfilling its purpose of bringing new generations of poultry into the "Church of the Innocent Blood."

FACING us was the altar, a large low dais which filled the end of the tabernacle. Dominating this stood a stout middle-aged Mulatto woman, who was no other than Mother Catherine, herself. The smooth, coffee-brown face wore, at times, an expression of quick shrewdness, too bold to be crafty, as the woman directed the activities of her "saints." The fact that they were all women showed her feminine bias. She radiated vitality, self-confidence and resourcefulness; and a white headdress patterned after that of a Red Cross nurse added to her air of authority. A large starched apron covered the ample rotundity of her figure and its bib bore the word MOTHER embroidered in big red letters across its top.

The singing ceased, and a line of Negroes formed itself in the open space between the altar and the benches. Mother Catherine took her stand between a kitchen table covered with heavy glass tumblers and quartered lemons, and a charcoal furnace upon which simmered a tin wash-boiler with a huge brown bottle in it.

IN A mellow voice, never hesitating for a word, she said: "I wants to gin yo' all a preachmen' of mysef, an' I wants to tell yer dat evvythin' I says an' evvythin' I does comes straight from God, cause I'm an ignant nigger an' don't know nothin' from mysef, an' dat's why I preaches clean an' sanatarium. Why yer think dis castor oil Mother Catherine goin' gin yer heals an' de common kind don't? I tell yer. De Lawd Jehoviah done tole Mother Catherine a secret, an' she done pray over dis oil. I ain't goin' tell yer what de Lawd tole me to say, cause den you know as much as me. But de sperit of sweet Jesus done enter inter dis oil an wid de he'p of de Lawd it sho' goin' chase yo' misery."

Evidently the oil was more than a mere remedy; it had become a ritual.

"An now dat's why yo' mus' all come ter Mother. She sho' he'p yer," continued the high priestess, as one of her handmaidens lifted the brown bottle from the hot water and filled a tumbler to the brim with the nauseous oil.

A tiny colored child, the first in line, stepped up and Mother Catherine, putting a pinch of salt into the glass, held it to the girl's lips. With-

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out a quiver she gulped it down but sucked gratefully at the section of lemon the Mother handed her afterward.

An epileptic boy came next. He appeared to drink his potion greedily, while one of the apostles stood behind him rubbing his back and another rubbing his stomach. After he had drained the last drop Mother Catherine wiped his mouth with a paper napkin and handed him his piece of "taste-killer." Then, his limbs jerking in every direction, his eyes rolling horribly, he was led from the tabernacle.

THE communicant who followed was a pleasant contrast. She was a strapping young Negress, black, fat and good-natured; clothed in the white robe and head-veil of a member. As soon as she saw the menacing glass she threw back her head and began to laugh so infectiously that everyone joined her.

Mother Catherine insisted, saying: "Stop yo' giglin' an take yo' anointmen'. I'll have a hard time but I goin' raise yer to saintdom yet."

"I cain't help it," gasped the girl between paroxysms, as the apostle assiduously rubbed her back, "De onliest way I kin take it is laffin'."

The sickening dose down, she skipped out in religious exaltation, her thick lips bulging over her share of lemon. As one by one the other supplicants swallowed their loathsome potion and disappeared, it seemed to me that their faith must be very real indeed to make them accept such a revolting ritual.

While Mother Catherine was ministering to her flock she kept up a running fire of good-natured talk.

"You all 'members dat white genelman dat live up on Millaudon Street wid dat misery in de stomach? De white doctors done pass him up. He was mos' daid, but I cured him wid de help of de Lawd. I sho' did."

A chorus of affirmation came from her congregation:

"Amen. Das sho' true!"

"Bress sweet Jesus!"

"Amen!"

"Wid jes' one anointin' of he innards, didn' he git freed of a black cat, claws an' all?"

"Yo sho' is right, Mother!"

"Amen!"

"Amen!"

"An' yo' 'member dat colored man dat los' a oyster wid a thousan' laigs?"

"Yas, an don' forgit dat woman what git shet of a wapses nes', Mother," called a voice from the audience.

NOT to be outdone, one of the "saints," who had been busy wiping out tumblers with pieces of tissue paper, took out of a dilapidated ice-box a small glass bottle containing a collection of what looked to be horrid white slugs, and handed it to her superior who continued her monologue as she held up the bottle.

"An' look at dis. See what dis lady done los' las' week. Dat oil sho' brung out de pisen."

"Amen!"

"Amen!"

"Wid de help of de Lawd I kin heal evvybody. Ef you in love-trubble, come to Mother. I kin git yer a job or help yer in business effen yer only got faith. Sister Terita, how many oils I done give today?"

An old, old woman with a black,

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wrinkled, intense face fluttered the leaves of a pad importantly before replying. "So fur it's two hundred an' three oils, an' endurin' of dis las' week you done give three thousan' six hundred an' forty-three. Thanks be ter Gawd an' sweet Jesus!"

By this time all the communicants had been oiled, but Mother Catherine continued her monologue, telling the story of her life and work, "fur de benefit of de white folks what don' know my hist'ry." Without the slightest bit of ranting usually indulged in by Negro religious leaders, she spoke with a great deal of force and directness. She had been a cook — and a mighty good one too — and had worked for all the best families, whom she enumerated, one by one, with a great deal of pride.

HER third husband had been a worldly soul, lusting after other women, and when she remonstrated with him for his loose conduct, he had kicked her in the stomach. This attack brought on a kind of paralysis, one eye drooped shut, her mouth was pulled askew and she dragged one leg painfully. Word came to her of Brother Isaiah, a white-bearded old prophet who had drifted down the Mississippi in a ramshackle houseboat and had tied up to the levee at the upper part of town. She heard of the marvellous cures he had made by the laying on of hands and the power of prayer. The wave of hysteria which swept the city caught her up, too, and she determined to see him. Painfully she made her way to the levee and waited for hours in the drizzling rain among the thousands who had come there bringing their sick. At last she found herself face to face with the patriarchal old man; she had held out her hands to him in silent supplication; but he had only shaken his head and said, "I ain't healin' no cullud folks terday."

Staggering down the levee she had fallen on her knees in the mud, and raising her arms to Heaven had prayed: "Oh, Jehoviah, hear me! Sweet Jesus help me! Only gin me de power ter heal an' I'll help cullud an' white, jes de same."

FROM that day her health began to improve. People, hearing of her cure, came to ask advice about their own ills. She healed many through her "revelation of de sperit of de Lawd an' by anointin' of dere innards." She enlarged her purposes. Women must be prevented from destroying their unborn babes, for who knows, they might be killing a second incarnation of Christ or some holy saint. She pictured in her mind a "manger" sufficiently large to house all these unwanted babies, black and white alike. A small group of fervent followers had banded around her. One of these gave her the lots on Caffin Avenue upon which this "manger" had been built. She had taken an oath never to leave the confines of the high board fence, and she never would. That was eight years ago.

"An' sence dat time, all dis Church of the Innocent Blood bin built, an' Mother Catherine done paid for it, an' dere ain't no morgridge neither. Dat's pretty good, white folks, ain't it?"

A group of middle-aged bourgeois-looking women, wearing the insignia of the cult on their arms, had come in quietly and were sitting in the front row. With them was a young girl, her

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black hair bound by a white fillet embroidered with the incomprehensible figures supposed to be worn by virgins.

ONE of this company, gaunt and straw-colored, stood up and, with a most illiterate German accent, declared that Mother Catherine had cured her of a dreadful running sore on her leg. She told in guttural and ghastly detail how "Mother" had split the body of a live pigeon and bound the still warm corpse on her leg. When it was removed, some days later, her leg was healed, but the pigeon was full of maggots.

Then this German peasant swallowed her huge beaker of oil like a soldier and, as she made way for the others, Mother Catherine announced that next week would be "Epsom Salts Sunday." With an Elizabethan directness, that can not be literally transcribed, she descanted upon the symptoms for which it was a sovereign remedy and the manner of its use, and declared she was going to pray "an' say de word" over twelve cases of salts and then give them all away. Faith, she reiterated, faith in the great "Jehoviah," in Mother Catherine and in the power of the Holy Ghost, would cure any ill which woman is heir to.

I offered Sister Terita, one of the "saints," a small contribution, but she waved it aside, saying she could not take it. I must give it to Mother Catherine; so, stepping up to the "altar," I tried to hand it to the stout high-priestess herself. She thanked me pleasantly but refused to touch it and pointed to a long narrow green bag hanging at her left side. Into this I dropped my money.

As I sat down again I began to marvel that a middle-aged colored cook, through faith alone, had been able to build in eight years such a group of structures, and implicitly to impose her leadership upon over a thousand followers, some of whom were white. Credulity in large doses entered into this weird blend of castor oil and Catholic ritual, but I sensed still another element. Certain details, hitherto overlooked, persuaded me that someone's "blind faith," probably Mother Catherine's, had been leavened with a healthy admixture of shrewd foresight.

One may be jailed for practising medicine without a license, and licenses are only granted to graduates of recognized medical schools. Anybody, however, can, with impunity, advise a friend how to cure himself if only no money is paid for his services. From the legal point of view it is the element of pay that transforms an innocent act into a criminal one.

THE green bag solved this problem for Mother Catherine. She gave her advice, her prayers, and her castor oil — free — gratis — for nothing — just as she had promised to do on the levee when Brother Isaiah refused to heal her and she prayed to God to grant her the power. If grateful recipients of her ministrations chose, unsolicited, to drop money into the green bag, that was not her fault; it was only a voluntary donation to her church — certainly not the payment of a medical fee. Her position was too impregnable to have been taken by chance.

Even the shape of the bag was conceived with foresight. It was long and

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narrow and the money rested deep down at the bottom, far out of reach of anyone who might have been tempted to put in a dime and take out a dollar.

The services had been so absorbing that I had not noticed a huge brass bedstead standing in effulgent splendor at the rear of the altar. White curtains, quaintly embroidered like those in the chapel, hung from the mosquito-bar rail at its head. As we went out our apostle and guide explained that Mother Catherine slept in it and, once retired, refused to be disturbed. If an importunate parishioner attempted to interfere with her rest, the message was given that "de sands of de desert done been let down an' nobody kin cross 'em."

## Anemones

By Robert P. Tristram Coffin

So many, many lonely years ago
I came upon belated drops of snow,
Drops of winter left and taking stem
And learned a holy thing in seeing them.

Under the trees so frail and wan not one
Could hold its cup of snow up to the sun
But let it spill its whiteness on the green,
A pale and everlasting Magdalene.

Then first I knew the best is left unsaid;
Words have no place upon the marriage bed;
There comes a time when we are one with flowers
And words as vain as bells in lovely towers.

Though we have torn our roots long since away,
The earth demands the fealty that she may;
The pith of us is silent as the trees
And worshipful as bowed anemones.

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# Seeing Red

By Isabelle Keating

*The Communist mind in action*

Much has been said of late of the Communists in America, of their conflicts with the police, of their plots to wreck the Government and their insidious burrowing into the labor world of the day.

Looking at them from the outside they appear to be a half frenzied, class-maddened group of fanatics, bent on destruction of one kind or another, but of negligible significance.

What they look like from their own side of the picture, what they are striving for, what they believe and why they believe it, what excuse they can find for existing in the United States where presumably success may be had for the taking, is something that is seldom considered and rarely answered. Few realize that the Communist here ever does anything but fight.

The truth is, of course, that their demonstrations are only the periodical climaxes in their programme, and that in between those climaxes the Communist lives and works and plays and plans largely after the manner of most other human beings; only he does it more intensely.

I do not know of any other group today of any nature so completely concentrated on its ideals as the Communists. In their meetings, in their efforts at education, in their publications, they are unendingly and intensely occupied with their doctrines. Observing them at close range, even the most indifferent observer can not help but be impressed tremendously by their enthusiasm and earnest devotion to their cause.

What is their cause? Briefly, it is the abolition of classes, or rather the levelling of classes until the need for the economic struggle is done away with. They expect to accomplish that end by revolution.

And when a Communist says revolution, he means revolution. He has no idea of an ultimate scrap to be fought by his children's children. The Communists — and I speak here of the Communists in New York City — expect revolution at the earliest possible moment. You hear it constantly from the lips of their leaders in meetings. "Leave the 'ultimate revolution' to the Socialists," they say. "Theirs is the policy of conciliation and amelioration by slow degrees. We will revolt at the earliest possible moment."

That is the driving spirit behind

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their meetings. They never lose sight of it.

Whenever two or three are gathered together, it is the underlying idea in their minds. Whenever more than that are gathered together, it becomes the theme upon which their leaders play variations.

Of course, no Communist is so sanguine as to believe that "the earliest possible moment" is imminent. One of the leading members of the party said to me: "Assuming that there are 36,000,000 wage earners in this country who might theoretically be interested in the overthrow of the Government, we must face the fact that at present no more than 25,000 of them are Communists." So the revolution isn't due at once.

No Communist believes, on the other hand, that it won't be imminent within a very few years. The Communists are relentless in their programme of propaganda toward that end. They are training workers in schools for children and adults for the débâcle. They keep their adherents stirred to a point of fever heat by constant rallies and demonstrations. They are forever making drives for new members. And they are developing a Communist press to spread their inflammatory propaganda that is assuming rather large proportions. There are at least twenty-five newspapers and periodicals being published in New York City today in some ten different languages, all concerned with the spread of Communist ideas.

*The Daily Worker* is the official mouthpiece of the party, and exercises the most influence. Among the other periodicals, some of which are directly under Communist direction, while others are connected with the movement less closely, are *The Labor Defender*, published by the International Labor Defense, *The Liberator*, published by the American Negro Labor Congress, *The Young Worker*, *The Woman Worker*, and *Solidarity*, the last of which is published by the Workers' International Relief.

The type of propaganda may be illustrated by this excerpt from the news columns of *The Daily Worker*, of May 10, announcing that Police Commissioner Whalen of New York would address the sailors. The excerpt, phrased in the customary Communist style, reads:

> Grover Whalen, New York Police Commissioner, whose men have piled up a record of clubbing workers who ask better wages or who refuse to starve without making a fuss about it, will lecture the sailors of the United States battle and scout fleets Monday night. He will tell them how glorious it is to die in a blaze of fire from shells fired by workers forced into service in other fleets; how fine it is to be submarined or blown up with mines and left floating for hours in an icy sea, if only they do it to make more profits for American bosses in China or Latin America or somewhere else.
>
> If this floorwalker from Wanamaker's, now chief of police, thinks he can make a sailor love a cop by trying to tell him how he ought to like his Government beans, and beans and beans, he ought to be put behind a Bible himself for a couple of hours instead of waving a golf club on the links at Palm Beach or a police club over the heads of the sailors' friends ashore.

This is Communist "news." What their editorials are like scarcely needs to be illustrated. But when it is realized that this type of propaganda is being printed in twenty-

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five publications of national and international circulation, it becomes plain that their press may be of something more than passing importance.

One of the first things the non-Communist asks is, "Why should there be a Communist movement in America? Why, if these people don't like America, don't they go back and enjoy the fruits of Communism in Russia?"

THE Communists will answer that question by saying that there are enough economic oppression and smouldering resentment in America today to bring about a revolution here exactly like the one in Russia — if the forces of unrest could be harnessed.

"The bulk of American wage earners get less than $25 a week," one Communist explained. "When you consider what a person must have in order to live with even slight comfort here, you realize that that sum is too little. The coal miners, the needle workers, the textile workers — they know that a man can't live decently on that amount. Why, the scrubwoman in the building where I work puts in twenty-three hours a week at her job, for which she receives $9. She's trying to support a family on it; and it can't be done. It is true that with the $9 she gets more economic comfort than did the Russian peasant before the revolution, but compared to the economic standards of this country, her condition is still bad enough to make her revolt."

Every article in the press describing a mother or father who snuffs out the life of his children because he can no longer keep up the economic struggle for their support is seized upon by the Communists as additional fuel for their cause. And with the financial slump of the past year, there have, it is true, been several such cases reported in the daily press.

So the Communist feels there is ample need for the movement in this country.

Then, too, he is an ambitious fellow. Cæsar and Alexander and Genghis Khan wanted the world for their domain; and the Communists are no more modest.

"Our horizons," as one of the members put it, "are like those of Columbus. The world, you know, is our goal."

Presumably, therefore, their movement, and certainly their sympathies cut straight through national lines.

But actually, national lines have created schisms in the party. Shortly after 1920, for example, a reorganization of the party was ordered from Russia. The old "ward system" was changed so that the party groups, instead of being laid out according to neighborhoods, were laid out by factories.

EVERY factory a fortress," had been Lenin's idea. His successors put the phrase into operation by making every factory a precinct. That meant that Finns, Poles, Germans, and Americans working side by side in the factories had to shift their allegiances from the homogeneous neighborhood "wards" to the polyglot factory "wards." And so great was the resentment over it that the party lost some 5,000 members. It caused one of the most serious upheavals in the history of the Communists in this country.

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The party continually faces leakages in this country, but they are not, as one might suspect, the leakages occasioned by the rise of workers in the economic scale. The Communists don't rise.

"Most of our members," a leader said, "are recruited from the very lowest strata of the laboring class. They are the people with whom the A. F. of L. will not bother — the scrubwomen, the apprentices, the textile workers — the lowest paid and most oppressed classes in the labor field. They aren't the classes who have a chance to rise in the economic scale." So there aren't any defalcations on that score.

But the party does lose many members, because it places such heavy demands upon its adherents. There are not only party dues, which, in proportion to the wages are high, but there is endless work to be done of a routine kind, in addition to the picketing and rioting that make up the Communists' regular fare. Members of the party are expected to give two or three nights of every week to their organization, and Saturdays and Sundays as well. The remainder of their leisure time is spent in the Communist schools, at which no less than 1,800 persons are registered in New York.

The amazing thing is not that these demands are made, but that thousands of persons are glad to accede to them. Anyone who attends a Communist meeting must be tremendously impressed by the amount of time they give cheerfully to their organization.

There are some, however, upon whom those burdens fall too heavily. A woman who works in a canning factory and who has a husband and three children said, "I believe in the Communist party. I am thoroughly in sympathy with its aims. But I simply have not the energy to give my time to it. I must get up at five o'clock in the morning and get my family's breakfast and get my children off to school. I myself must be at work by seven o'clock. When I come home in the afternoon, I must finish my housework and get supper for the family. Then, three nights a week I go to the Communist school. I haven't the energy left to go to their meetings and do the party work as well."

The fact that the Communists demand so much of their members probably explains in part at least why so many of them are young. They must be young and extraordinarily energetic to be able to be members.

At the present time they claim that the party is being strengthened from two sources. The first is their reputedly successful efforts to gain new members among the lowest stratum of the working classes — the stratum, which, as they put it, has been traditionally neglected and exploited. They claim that 6,000 new members have been recruited from that class. The second source of strength they claim is among the Negro workers. The Socialists and the A. F. of L., the Communists will tell you, are indifferent to the Negroes. The Communists welcome them, and urge them to join the party. Any white worker who makes a disparaging remark about a Negro is disciplined by the party, and every

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effort at granting the Negro full equality in party affairs is made.

Some members have left the party because of this movement; "and we gladly bid them goodbye," the leaders say.

Naturally, recruiting the members of their party from such material, the problem of getting and keeping leaders is an acute one.

They can not pay their leaders much. The men who are in the employ of the party receive $40 a week if they are married and $30 if they are single; and even that income is not regular. So their leaders must work for glory or for love of the cause, instead of for remuneration. But there are leaders.

IN THE main, they are developed from two sources. There are first, a few college men and women who have grown disgusted with the present régime and turned their activities into Communistic channels. Most of them are teaching in the Communist schools. They are not the most valuable leaders to the party, because, while they may understand, they do not speak the workers' languages, and the gulf between them and their fellows is just wide enough to preclude their effective leadership.

The second class of leaders is developed from the ranks of the Communists themselves. These are the men and women who began on the lowest rung of the economic and educational ladder, and worked their way up. They are the ones who studied by candle and lamp light when the day was over, and who rose to dream of another order for their fellow workers. These are the ones in whom the Communists repose most faith today. "Later," they say, "we will need the college trained men and women. Now we have most need of the leaders who rise from the ranks."

The party's motto is "Learn while you fight"; and every effort is bent toward putting that motto into practice. The two ideas of learning and fighting are prominent always in Communist conversation.

The things they learn are not the things taught in any other school in these United States, either. They are concerned solely with studies of the history of labor unions and labor movements, histories of Communism, past, present and future, and with the theory and practice of Marxism. They are literally saturated with party theories and ideas, therefore, from the day they become Communists. They know exactly what they expect to do.

FIRST, there will be the revolution. Then the workers will step in and take command of industry, of the railroads and of the economic life of the country in general. They expect to have the full coöperation of the farmers in that respect, so that there will be no cleavage between the industrial and agricultural worlds. They expect to have leaders comparable to college men to step into the necessary executive positions. Then indeed will be the workers' heyday.

They don't necessarily plan to exterminate the boss classes, but they do plan to serve warning that if the former "boss" classes get in their way, it will be too bad for the bosses.

They do not at present preach

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individual acts of violence to individual capitalists (although the Young Communists often go so far in their meetings), but they talk endlessly of the class struggle that must culminate in revolution.

THEY are merciless in their self-appraisal and self-criticism, which they believe to be essential to the health and progress of their party. After the May Day parade — a parade in which some 25,000 persons took part, and a demonstration that would have done credit to any organization — a four-page folder was circulated among members of the party, as a *post mortem*. Two pages of the folder were devoted to praise. The remainder was criticism.

"We have no intention of doing what Lincoln accused his Generals of doing — sitting down and enjoying our victories," they said.

A Communist demonstration is an impressive affair. The sight of thousands of workers ranging in age from six to sixty, marching eight abreast and singing *The Internationale* at the top of their lungs, is something you do not easily forget.

You feel their exultation. It is not a kind of exultation that is strange to the streets of New York or any other city. Psychologically, it is exactly the same spirit that carried the suffragettes down Fifth Avenue year after year, and that later sped the army off to France.

The only difference is that while the suffragettes hurled their epithets at the legislators, and the patriots considered the Germans as arch villains, the Communists vent all their spleen on the bosses. And to the Communists, there are only two kinds of people in the world — themselves and the bosses.

Marching around Union Square, they shout their Communist songs with precisely the same ardor and éclat with which high school youngsters shout their school songs. Their cheer leaders manage them in just about the same way, too; and even their cheers have had their genesis in "bosses" schools. Union Square has resounded many times to a group of young Communists shouting in response to their yell leader's signal: "Are we in it? Well, I guess! Communists, Communists, Yes, Yes, Yes!" Which seems all very well in a gymnasium where a basketball game is being played, but which does seem slightly out of tune with revolution.

Their songs, too, bear the stamp of the régime they hate. *The Internationale*, of course, is distinctly their own; but as for the rest — and they do considerable singing, to the accompaniment of brass bands — the rest of their songs are written to the strident measures of *Marching Through Georgia*, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and *Hinky-Dinky, Parley-Voo*.

THE men and women in these demonstrations are of two distinct types. There are those with hard, dull faces, plodding, sullen, slouchy. And there are the intellectuals — the long-haired men and short-haired women, whose eyes are as keen as their tongues and wits. They march in the parades with clenched fists held high, but a long parade on a hot day takes most of the effectiveness out of the gesture.

Across the front of the Communist headquarters in Union Square one

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reads these legends: "For the seven hour day and the five day week." "For unemployment insurance." "Against imperialist wars." "For defense of the Soviet Union." "On with the fight for work or wages." They do not seem highly inflammatory sentiments for the most part. Most of them will probably make as pallid stuff for demonstrations a hundred years hence as suffrage would make today.

Yet at the present time they furnish the basis for what the Communists term "the class struggle," and they are theoretically the reasons for "revolution at the earliest possible moment."

THEY are the chief things that concern the workers both in their large and in their small meetings. Gathered at night and on Sundays in their red-festooned clapboard halls, fitted with hard wooden benches, the Reds talk endlessly of these ends. Men and women, children and adults, harangue their fellow workers about the shorter week, the vicious capitalistic speed-up processes, and the class struggle, until the horizons of their world close down on a handful of principles, outside of which the world stands inimically and tyrannically arrayed.

One is impressed by the fact that there is no deadwood at Communist meetings. Before and after and during the meetings the members never cease talking, planning, scheming, to bring about their ultimate goal. Their energy in that respect seems boundless. It seems doubly remarkable in this day, particularly, when Americans in general are disposed to sit by comfortably and let the world take its course. Compared to most political or social gatherings, the Communist meetings are cataclysmic.

What their significance will be in the long run is of course conjectural. It must be remembered that the Communists here do not act alone. They are in direct communication with the Government in Russia at all times, and guide their policies according to the dictates of that régime. Some American Communists who have gone to Russia with the intention of staying there have been sent back here by the Central Government because Russia realizes that the need for leaders here is great.

One must remember, too, that although many of their party aims, such as social insurance and shorter working hours, are endorsed by many persons who are not Reds, that does not presage the ultimate absorption of the Communists into the woof of American life; for their major premise is the development of class struggle and the opposition to all class collaboration.

NORMAN THOMAS, the former Socialist candidate for President, says in appraising the movement that its strength will always be in direct proportion to the crimes and blunders of the rest of the world. And Mathew Woll, vice-president of the American Federation of Labor, says, "Communism and Democracy are opposites. The one must combat the other so long as they both exist in the same world. He who tries to ignore that fact brews a storm of destruction. He who sees it and averts it may help to avert catastrophe and save Democracy for posterity."

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# These Literary Lobbies

By Harry Hansen

*Being a little friendly gossip about book publicity and the flourishing Author's Tea Racket*

And now we have the literary racket, perhaps the most persistent of all rackets, devoted to the popularizing of books and authors, to winning kudos and golden opinions for them by all those methods which have been used to popularize the radio speaker, the motion picture actress, the baseball hero and even the prize fighter. The literary racket is not as dangerous as the beer racket; it is not related to the artichoke racket, or the cabbage racket, or the spinach racket; it has its own princes and potentates, and its stamping ground is the literary salon, where reputations are made by an excess of amiability, helped along by daintily flavored ices, or maybe—tea.

The literary racket is the direct result of over-production in books. Authors have been multiplying out of all proportion to the size of the country. Publishing houses have been increasing like new villages on the Jersey side. Bookstores have piled their shelves high with books, have packed them in double and triple rows, and relegated the old-time standard sets to the basement. The reader is amiable, but his time is impinged on by the radio, the motion picture, the aviation and exploration news in the day's paper, the hubbub over Wall Street, the straw vote on Prohibition, and the latest parade up Broadway. If books are not to disintegrate into wood pulp on the shelves something must be done to move them. Hence, the literary racket.

There are teas for authors, receptions for professors who have spent their lives in the seclusion of the library, dancing parties, cocktail parties, interviews, and adventures invented for the most part by publicists who are hired by the week, or the month, or the book — all with the object of getting the author and his work before the critics, the public, the booksellers and all who can contribute to his popularity and his welfare. In other words, the publishing business is speeding up, and because the book has until now been regarded as a thing apart, a creative work intended solely to call heart to heart, soul to soul, one intellect to another, this worldly business of promotion is being termed the literary racket.

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The term is new, but I can't say the method is original; salons have been used for the last three centuries to advance the reputations of artists; critics and patrons have always been beguiled by a good dinner or a steaming punch bowl, and there are historic instances of the effectiveness of these methods, especially in days when poor journalists wore threadbare coats and baggy pantaloons. Things are staged more elaborately today, but then the prize is greater. A best seller, with all its implications of serial rights, dramatic rights, and the newest right of all, talkie rights, with television rights already being reserved by sagacious and far-seeing authors, may make fortunes for author and publisher.

The present methods are said to be comparatively recent, but it is hard to believe that a few centuries back publishers battened on poor authors, accepting their wares for a pittance, and that authors detested them. Today author and publisher go down the street arm in arm; their agreeable relations are duly set forth in a contract made bomb-proof by the Authors' League, the good fortune of one is the prosperity of the other, and the publisher goes about thinking up little devices for popularizing the author, and the author — glory be, how he hates it!

THERE is an impression among those who don't go to literary teas that these functions are intended solely to debauch critics who might otherwise be reluctant to praise a book of modest attainments, or to keep reviewers in good humor so that the author gets a good press. I'm afraid that the literary teas would die out in one season if this were the case, for the publishers would find, through the returns from the clipping bureaus, that they were wasting much good time in vain efforts. Moreover, what with lunches, dinners, teas, receptions, first-nights and even buggy rides — or a box party at the circus — critics get so confused as to who is who and why that these rival demonstrations checkmate one another. The literary function has a definite business object — of that I shall speak later — but I believe that its moving impulse is the friendliness that obtains in the publishing game in New York, and which makes it fun to "pull a grand party."

I KNOW, for instance, that Joseph Brewer, of Brewer and Warren, a house that has given some of the most entertaining functions of the year, just dotes on corralling a lot of kindred spirits and giving them a grand time; that both Richard Simon and Max Schuster, who are among the more astute of the younger publishers, plan a party like two boys tickled to have the gang in and think up all sorts of ingenious devices to make the evening snappy; that the Literary Guild, which, in contrast to its competitor, the Book of the Month Club, is in constant touch with the social calendar, invites any number of persons who can do it no specific good but are just good fellows and friends of the directors. The Century Company, about a year ago, happened to give an elaborate party on St. Patrick's Day, with the result that green became the dominant note in the decorations. This year it repeated the event at Del-

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monico's with the appropriate setting. Such functions take the edge off the charge that entertainment is provided to put books on the map; I am sure that even when this is the excuse that enthusiastic promotion men give the auditor, their original emotion was the desire to help the gay times along.

Now a tea was until recently a harmless social function, an excuse for the gathering of half a dozen or more kindred spirits for the sake of gossip, with tea actually being served from a fine old Georgian piece after the manner of the Anglo-Saxon forebears who popularized the trade with the East Indies. And I dare say tea is still a happy function for many New Yorkers, authors and critics alike, who join in occasional libations to the muse in the late afternoon of a busy day. Only reluctantly has it become associated with elaborate functions in exclusive hotels, attended by anywhere from fifty to five hundred persons, with uniformed attendants moving about carrying large silver trays laden with choice canapés and sandwiches, with punch bowls filled to the brim with pale reminders of their former glories, with the murmur of many voices forming a background for the strumming of a jazz orchestra, probably playing for dancing in an adjoining room.

After all it is a regal way to introduce an author or a book, although authors invariably get lost in the shuffle or are thrust into a corner, with perhaps a serious interviewer, bent on filling next Sunday's feature columns, asking the poor male where he gets the costumes he puts on his women. Most of the guests forget all about the author after the first perfunctory handshake; they are too busy greeting friends of the last tea, which may have taken place the day before, or indeed, may be taking place simultaneously in another hotel. But I have no doubt that the author-guest, particularly if he or she comes from abroad, is sufficiently impressed, and that is no small matter nowadays, for authors have a way of wilting like a calla lily two days old if publishers give them no attention, thereby becoming easy victims to the blandishments of rival publishers, should the latter attempt anything as unethical as poaching on a competitor's preserves.

An efficiency expert might say that this is another example of the loose way in which books are published. He might ask that every function be specifically tied up with promotion and made to show results in sales. The publisher might reply that he is building goodwill and indirectly getting publicity for his author by impressing his importance on a town which has more celebrities to the square foot than any other capital on the globe. There are, of course, two or three specific results to be had from entertaining. I have mentioned this business of keeping authors in good humor. There is one other person who responds nobly to social attentions and this is the buyer for book stores or wholesale book houses. A wise salesman never overlooks those little attentions which go to make life pleasant for a buyer with a big discretionary account, and even though the buyer can not load up with plugs, as the trade has it, she

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— it is nearly always a she — is after all human. Finally when authors are brought into the spotlight and fêted they become the objects of attention from interviewers and feature writers — a large and important class which commands much space in the Sunday newspapers.

Look about you at one of the larger parties and you will be surprised to find authors, editors, publishers, musicians, singers, newspaper men, publicity men, sales managers, all the busy folk who make up the publishing life of New York, in one grand mêlée. There are some authors who are never seen at a social function; there are others who never let an affair go by without attending. I have observed some of the most aloof and unreconcilable satirists steaming up at literary teas, buzzing about and evidently enjoying themselves, even if they intend later to publish an ironical commentary on the whole business. Some publicity agents are adept at "getting the bunch out," and even the most recalcitrant of authors can be moved by intimate friends to attend gatherings which he might shun if he thought he was being exploited.

A BOOK of curious reminiscences might be written about life on New York's literary fringe. If I were planning it I should make the high light that elaborate and amazing party "pulled" at the Ritz for Peggy Hopkins Joyce, on the occasion of the publication of her book, *Men, Marriage and Me*. The Macaulay Company should be named in this connection, for it bore the burden of the expense, which must have been no small item. Everybody came, if for no other reason than to see the amazing Peggy, and that lady, whatever her modest talents for writing, rose splendidly to the occasion. A slim figure, trying hard to remain girlish, with her blond hair peeping most attractively from under her felt hat, she had the ready phrase of the hostess accomplished in passing innumerable guests down a long line to the refreshment stand. Everybody was there, absolutely everybody, and you could observe Paul Rosenfeld cheering up a dowager in one corner and overhear the late William Bolitho discussing excavations in Etruria in the other.

I SUPPOSE for surprise parties we ought to name some of the functions held for Trader Horn, alias Zambesi Jack, a character out of a picture book, incredible as a best-seller author. To me he came fully up to expectations and I enjoyed the quaint juxtaposition of his frail but alert personality with the sophisticated literary society of New York. I am sure that his book will survive, even if only on a boys' bookshelf, but I am also confident that grown-ups will come back to the quaint narrative which Ethelreda Lewis built up out of his joss-house soliloquies. Joan Lowell was another flaming meteor on the literary firmament, and like a meteor she went out in a puff of smoke, but some of her hard-boiled repartee, wholly in keeping with the maritime character that she affected in her book, is still being passed around. Hendrik Willem Van Loon is an ebullient story teller and things are always lively when he is around, but Hendrik prefers to be the host, and some happy events have

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been held at the Algonquin and the Brevoort under his auspices. I have never known a more generous man, nor one who, professedly an iconoclast and contemptuous of piddling human affairs, more thoroughly loves the company of his fellow men. I suppose no event caused more surprise than a magnificent tea party given by the Brothers Boni at the Savoy Plaza for Upton Sinclair, and when I twitted him on being entertained in the home of wealth and affluence, his eyes twinkled and he chuckled at the spectacle of the bloated bourgeoisie harboring a defender of proletarian principles.

GOING back a few years, that elaborate luncheon given at the Brevoort by Ben Huebsch for Sherwood Anderson was a most auspicious — and, as it turned out, fateful — event. Anderson is diffident about meeting many people, although not at all backward with intimates; hence few knew him well. He had been widely heralded as an authentic American author of distinction; had won the Dial Prize and was definitely a lion. Ben Huebsch, who is not among those who entertain at the slightest pretext, spread himself on the lunch. More men rarely seen in public will come to a party planned by Ben Huebsch than anyone else I know, and for this occasion Theodore Dreiser, H. L. Mencken, George Jean Nathan and innumerable others who do not frequent such affairs were present. Everybody acclaimed Anderson and everybody shook Ben Huebsch warmly by the hand, but whether the chicken served to Anderson was disappointing, or the peas were cold, or the coffee was weak — the upshot was that within a few months Anderson jumped to another publisher. This probably cured Ben of giving luncheons for authors, for he remained quiescent for about four years and only recently emerged as host, with his partners in the Viking Press, for Jonathan Leonard.

THE intimate luncheon or dinner with an author as guest is still as much of a treat in modern New York as it was in the days when Samuel Johnson held forth at the Cheshire Cheese, or Shakespeare's gay company met at the Mermaid, or George Moore and his painters sat around the Pallas Athene, or Ernest Dowson and Beardsley looked with melancholy mien into their ale-mugs at the Mitre. I have innumerable pleasant memories of the spirited table-talk at gatherings of perhaps a dozen or less in which some notable was being presented. Perhaps he was a friend of long standing; perhaps we had all panned his books, or damned them with faint praise — what of it? In large literary capitals authors and commentators do not shun one another; critics do not sit in ivory towers contemplating the metaphysical aspects of man's labors; there is a pleasant release from the tasks of the day in friendly intercourse, and the only drawback is that New York offers so much, so many contacts and social relationships, so many opportunities to cultivate men of a thousand varied interests, that friendship is apt to run shallow rather than deep, and to be a thing of intermittent, rather than frequent, renewals.

Practically every important pub-

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lishing house today has its publicity man (or woman) who promotes its books by writing interesting copy about authors and their work, by apprising editors of publications and arranging for interviews with authors. This man sees that authors are properly introduced, arranges meettings with persons in key positions, plans talks over the radio, and coöperates with the advertising and sales departments. In modern merchandising such an effort is almost indispensable.

THE great agencies of publicity, such as the newspapers, are always telling their readers about personalities; the publicity man tries to make them aware of the outstanding qualities of his candidate. In some fields, such as automobiles and the theatre, the publicity and promotion man often writes the interviews himself and places them in feature sections of the newspaper. It is a paradox that the publishing business, which is said to be behind most other professions, is not able to write its own reviews. Perhaps this is proof of backwardness; nevertheless reviewers and critics are very jealous of their independence and not a few of them regard their writings as creative work on a par with that of the author who writes books. The chief object of a publicity man is to get attention for his book and author, and this is entirely legitimate. If he tries to impress the critic so that a favorable review shall result, he is apt to overstate his case. An editor must make his selections from among tons of books that keep pouring in on him. The reasons for selecting the books he does are obscure to the public, and often also to the publisher whose book happens to be ignored, but the editor can do no more than try to live up to his policy of selection.

I suppose if one person is capable of judging the effort that is being put into the promotion of books, it is the literary editor of a periodical, who, in the course of events, sees three-quarters of all books published. He receives hints, suggestions, importunities, and sometimes even threats. He is told by half a dozen different persons, carefully chosen because their residences are wide apart, that a certain author is a genius and his book a discovery. Strangers write out of a clear sky telling him how wonderful they have found a certain book, adding the emphatic but wholly misleading statement that they are not acquainted with the author. One of the crudest tricks, and one that invariably brings resentment, is to turn loose on an editor and a critic a flood of clippings from other periodicals, chiefly laudatory comment from provincial papers, most of them reprintings of publicity material sent out either by the author or his publishers. It never occurs to an author that it is poor tactics to try to dragoon a critic into agreement with half of the world, especially if he is an individual who is proud of his independent point of view.

SUCH tactics are simply mistakes; the reason behind them is easily forgiven. For after an author has worked a year or more on a book, has lived with it, eaten with it, slept with it, finally beheld it fresh from the press, he may be forgiven for hoping that someone else will tell the

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world of its merits. What he does not comprehend is that thousands of others have done the same thing, and that his masterpiece now enters the sordid competition of the marketplace, attempting to attract passers-by by appearing on the bookstalls in a gaudy jacket, and that his is only one of hundreds and thousands of books similarly displayed. Moreover, he does not realize that the critic who reviews these books can do no more than discuss a limited number, and that even periodicals employing many critics, and discussing regularly hundreds of new books, can by no means do justice to the total output. That this situation will ever be remedied I doubt.

As AMERICA increases its reading public there will always be books so predominantly acceptable to the majority that they will reward their authors out of all proportion to their merits; by the same token they will eclipse, or partially obscure, other worthy books that do not enjoy this popularity. The motion picture has pointed the way; today one actress appears on the screen simultaneously before millions of spectators; it is conceivable that authorship in the future will have similar compensations and handicaps. The author who does not win such disproportionate rewards must hope for the growth of specialized groups, which will reward him in smaller measure so far as material benefits are concerned, but give him, nevertheless, the judgment of his peers. This too is foreshadowed in the growth of the audience for poetry within the last fifteen years, and the coming of various periodicals devoted to poetry; criticism no less is developing its spokesmen, its students, and its periodicals. These more special subjects have little to do with the literary racket. They are aloof from endeavors to influence the marts of trade, and by their very nature they seek a candid opinion and veer away from any that has been won by cajolery and influence. For it remains patent that the great novelist needs no support from the literary racket. He may rest assured that if he has merit his public will find him out despite the tom-toms that are beating for more brazen and less talented writers.

THE best authors that I know are personally generous and helpful men, but self-effacing, never eager to pose in public. I doubt whether excellence in writing, painting and other forms of artistic creative work are compatible with exploitation. Many artists are egotists, many are vain and long for recognition, but the best ones by the very nature of their occupation see the sham and pretence of vain posturing before the public. I doubt that a first-rate author would engage a publicity agent to build up his personality and push his wares, as is sometimes done in the lively and less creative occupations. The author is known by his book. Neither his dogs, nor his cats, nor his motor boats, nor his striped vest, will advance his popularity, but if he has the magic touch he may be misshapen, unmoral, legally bigamous, as dripping wet as Niagara or as dry as a camel's tongue — the public will take him to its heart.

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# What's In a Name?

By R. P. Harriss

*The story of famous autographs, and of the three classes—collectors, fans and bandits—who accumulate them*

"What's in a name?" asked Juliet. And how variously do we answer that question!

"Twenty-eight thousand dollars," says a purchaser of a Button Gwinnett signature.

"Romance," says the owner of one of Washington's love letters to Sally Fairfax.

"A thrill!" says the bobbed-haired autograph bandit, as she scuttles through the police lines, pen in hand, to the side of some celebrity of the moment, with a request for his kind favor.

"Names make news" is a true axiom, yet the very obscurity of the name of Thomas Lynch, Jr., Revolutionary patriot, makes him the rarest of the Signers.

"A good name is better than great riches," says the moralist, to which we agree; but the autograph dealer might well amend it to read: "will bring me great riches."

M. Vrain Lucas a few years ago found a fortune in the forged names of Cleopatra, Mary Magdalene, Alcibiades, Shakespeare and Dante — before his wealthy Parisian dupe finally became aware of the hoax and sent the perpetrator to prison. Robert Spring, an Englishman, found the name of Stonewall Jackson a lucrative one, albeit his forgeries of it eventually brought only disgrace and poverty. The boy-poet, Chatterton, achieved in the names of wholly mythical poets and artists notoriety and a kind of fame. The name of the late Warren G. Harding stands for a mediocre President, in the minds of many people, but to collectors, particularly those desiring holographs, the handwriting of this recent Chief Executive is a prize.

The name — even the initials — of George Bernard Shaw, attached to the merest scribble of a note, almost invariably means that Shavian wit has loosed another darting hornet. And in the name of Charlotte Corday — provided it be the authentic script of that "possessed" peasant girl who assassinated Marat at his bath — in that name is rarity so great that collectors hesitate to place a value upon it. It is in the list of the collector's immortals.

Among the old collections — more notable for the historic significance of the writings to which the auto-

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graphs are attached than for the autographs themselves — are those of Sir Robert Cotton, in the British Museum, and of Philippe de Béthune, Comte de Selles et Charost, in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The most important collection formed in England in recent years is that of the late Alfred Morrison, which was dispersed and sold at auction during the World War for slightly less than $300,000, or probably about a third of what it would have brought ten years later.

In America, the outstanding collection among numerous great collections is that of J. Pierpont Morgan, who is also a notable collector in many other fields. Among the early American collectors were Henry E. Huntington, who began the Huntington Library, combining several large collections; Dr. William E. Sprague, who at the time of his death in 1876 had amassed 90,000 items, the largest collection, and the finest, that the country had known; Louis J. Cist, a Cincinnati banker; and Robert Gilmore, of Baltimore, and Israel K. Tefft, of Savannah, two Southern collectors who were ahead of their time in recognizing the value which would eventually attach to the handwriting of prominent American leaders.

Numbered among the early collectors, who devoted special attention to amassing autographs of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence was Dr. Thomas A. Emmett of New York, who gathered together four complete sets of Signers' autographs. Within recent years, complete collections of the Signers have been made by John W. Garrett, of Baltimore, now Ambassador to Italy; Robert C. Norton and K. V. Painter, of Cleveland; and Frederick Stanhope Peck, of Providence, Rhode Island. The time is rapidly approaching when there will be no more complete sets of Signers to be had, since there are known to be extant not more than forty-five Lynch autographs, while the Gwinnetts number only about fifty. Incidentally, it may be noted here that the record price for a Lynch is $9,500, although a Gwinnett has fetched nearly three times that figure. Why this should be so is a question for the collectors to settle. The scarcity of autographs of these two patriots is explainable mainly in the fact that both died young: Gwinnett was mortally wounded in a duel at Savannah on May 16, 1777, less than a year after signing the Declaration; and Lynch, incurably ill at the age of thirty, was lost at sea after he had left his South Carolina home for southern France, in search of health.

Distinction may be made between the collector and the hunter, but there should most properly be made a further distinction, namely, the bandit. The three groups might then be defined somewhat as follows:

1 — *The autograph collector.* A cultured, discerning person with sufficient wealth and judgment to amass a collection which will prove valuable to the scholar and a delight to the literary connoisseur. He may be either amateur or professional.

2 — *The autograph hunter.* One possessed of considerable shrewdness, an acquisitive nature, and usually afflicted with what Macaulay

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called "*lues Boswelliana*" — disease of admiration. He might with accuracy be described as an autograph "fan." While not necessarily a despicable person, his collecting is frequently without real significance (though here it is well to state that there have been some splendid exceptions) and it generally affords little that is of outstanding importance to the scholarly investigator. Possibly the famous Emmett papers, in the New York Public Library, should be classified, technically, as the collection of a "superior" hunter or fan, for, although they are a mine for the historian, the arrangement is essentially that of the fan, and, as a scholarly friend expresses it, "the historian who tries to dig into it must have his wits about him or he will go oofty-goofty in the labyrinth: it is not nearly so well arranged as, for instance, the lesser but still valuable Leffingwell collection in the New Haven Colony Historical Society, which was got together by a learned Yale professor."

3 — *The autograph bandit.* A creature (frequently female) which grabs autographs indiscriminately, not for any love of great names or admiration for their owners, but chiefly for the excitement entailed in procuring them. Such a creature usually possesses a considerable amount of low cunning and, if repulsed in his or her initial frontal attack, will often resort to devious and annoying methods of reaching his objective. It need hardly be added that, like the brave old pauper in the workhouse ballad, he must be "as bold as brass." He scans the front page of the daily press and goes after whoever happens to be commanding the blackest headlines, irrespective of that person's worth or standing. An axe murderer or a cinema star is quite as likely to arouse his frantic interest as a transatlantic flier or an Arctic explorer.

THE high prices which old and rare autographs bring make collecting on the grand scale a hobby for wealthy men only. But many autographs are now practically unavailable at any price. For example, in all the material in all the collections of the world there are only six Shakespeare signatures accounted for, the last having been brought to light as late as 1910, in the British Public Record Office. This is, perhaps, an extreme case. Nevertheless, there are scores of other great names which are not to be seen in autograph form outside carefully preserved private or public museums.

The scarcity of several of our Signers has already been commented upon. In the sale of the Theodore Sedgwick papers in 1926, a document signed by Button Gwinnett brought $28,000. In 1927, a letter bearing the signatures of Gwinnett, Hancock, Morris, Middleton, Lewis and Read (all Signers) was sold for $50,000. The autographs of Washington, Jefferson, Charles Carroll of Carrollton and other leaders of their period are fairly numerous, owing to the voluminous correspondence carried on by them, but the prices are steadily mounting. Certain important American patriots who had more faith in the might of the sword than of the pen and who, consequently, left few holographs or autographs, doubtless would turn in their graves, could

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they but know the value in good hard dollars of the illegible penmanship of General Israel Putnam, Colonel Ethan Allen, and John Paul Jones.

THE early American authors, too, are returning to favor. As most of them were prolific letter-writers, however, and some of them (notably Longfellow) favored thousands of requests for autographs, the prices are not as fabulous as one might imagine. The name of Poe stands at the top of the list of desirable American literary autographs, both here and abroad: he is an exception, and the demand has sent his autograph-stock rocketing — an ironic fact when one considers that he once had to beg editors to buy his writings at any price. The original manuscript of *The Raven* was insured by its present owner, not long ago, for $200,000. Emerson, Whittier, Whitman, Lafcadio Hearn, Melville, Riley and Field have been commanding good prices for several years, a Field manuscript having sold for as much as $1,700 in 1911. Mark Twain is not regarded by dealers as rare, but such is his continued popularity that his signature is in great demand, and is growing dearer.

As Poe is the finest of American literary autographs, Lincoln is the most sought after of American historical signatures, although his is by no means the rarest. Of European historical autographs, that of Napoleon is most in demand; of English literary names, the dealers list Dickens first, in point of desirability.

The discovery of numerous manuscripts, autographs and holographs of some man whose writings have hitherto been exceptionally scarce might result in a deflation, causing a particular stock to tumble. A considerable number of names, however, are in such demand that the discovery of additional signatures could not seriously affect the market, as all of the new-found material could readily be absorbed into collections. Unknown to dealers or collectors, a large bundle of immensely valuable historical documents has been found by a historian in Pennsylvania, the discovery having been made during the past year. Although the autographs alone are worth thousands, the content of the documents is of vast import, and, when published, must surely cause historians to recast their conception of one of America's household gods of Revolutionary history fame. Conceivably these papers may be placed in the hands of dealers for disposal, but not until a complete record has been made of all of them.

THE prices paid for rare signatures have tempted many swindlers, and there have been innumerable forgeries of famous names. The operations of the Englishman Spring and the Frenchman Lucas are most notable. Indeed, Spring, who died in 1876, had been so busy forging the names of Revolutionary patriots and Confederate leaders during his lifetime that he appears to have had little time left for writing his own name. Though his forgeries no longer take in anyone but the most unwary amateur, his own autograph is a collector's item!

The case of M. Lucas seems altogether incredible. Certainly his amazing hoax could never have been carried through had he not

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found the perfect victim in a distinguished but utterly senile collector, Michel Chasles, a member of the French Academy of Sciences. The old scholar, being rich and gullible, paid great sums for the most preposterous forgeries, M. Lucas not hesitating to offer for sale all manner of supposedly ancient letters — written in modern French. When the forger was revealed by an English scholar, and tried and sentenced in a French court, the chagrin of the collector at his own exposure is declared to have been as great as that of the prisoner.

MODERN collectors are not such easy marks, hence modern forgers must needs be surpassingly clever. Their favorite (and most effective) dodge is to forge names on the margins or fly-leaves of old books, or upon genuine old documents. An apparent case of the latter came to my attention recently, an Abraham Lincoln signature on an old State document which was in itself undoubtedly genuine, but which probably had been tampered with, for it had already been signed by an official in the Lincoln Government and did not require the President's signature. The only sure way to determine fraud in any case is to procure the services of a handwriting expert.

Although wealth is a prerequisite for those wishing to collect old autographs, it is possible for a person of modest means to amass a valuable lot of moderns — potentially valuable, at least. Sooner or later, however, such a collector, in the warmth of his zeal, is going to commit banditry. And another drawback: it may lead to other evils, like stamp collecting, and debts; and not always to the collecting of the utile and beautiful, like pipes and beer steins. There is Carl Van Vechten, who goes in for limited editions, bindings, book jackets, pamphlets, postcards, newspaper clippings, and Hollywood scandals. My interest in Mr. Van Vechten's postcards (even his Paris ones) is merely ho-hum; but my interest perks up when a friend shows me an album containing the favorite limericks of his ribald literary friends together with autographs and dates. Every man to his own humor — or folly.

Sometimes the autograph habit is acquired so innocently that the victim is astonished, one fine day, to discover that he is incurably afflicted. Though by that time he will have become so taken with it that he would not be cured, even if there were a sovereign remedy available. (And the one remedy, naturally, would be the killing off of all celebrities, which many will deem ill advised.)

IN BALTIMORE I found such a case, in fact two cases — both quite young: Nancy, aged twelve, and her brother John, aged ten. Between them, these two youngsters had gathered together a formidable array of names. Even relatively obscure persons, such as King Boris and the Sultan of Perak, were there, while Queen Marie of Rumania had sent her photograph, autographed almost as graciously as that of a West Coast movie queen. A letter from a popular actor began it. The children had been reading *Don Quixote* together, and when Otis Skinner came

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to town in *Sancho Panza* they enjoyed his Sancho so well that they wrote him a note of appreciation. As it happened, the Baltimore dramatic critics had responded to the usual strenuous Skinnerian acting in rather lukewarm fashion, and this enthusiastic appreciation from the two young theatre-goers appears to have been especially soothing at such a time. It warmed the cockles of Mr. Skinner's heart. He wrote them a pleasant letter. . . . It started an autograph rash which was not to be allayed. Royalty, Presidents, Generals, poets, playwrights, novelists, scientists — each illustrious name has merely inflamed it. They sat down and wrote more letters; more autographs came in. And so on — *ad infinitum.*

THE sister's taste runs to artistic, musical and literary people. The fact that her own name — Nancy Bacon — offers opportunities for interesting rhymes has tempted many, including Senator Pepper of Pennsylvania, to essay flights with Pegasus up the Parnassian slopes. Some of them were lengthy flights, not, however, without halting moments. Others, among them Irving Bacheller, were brief. Mr. Bacheller favored with a quatrain:

My dear young friend, Miss Nancy Bacon,
Your letter has my fancy taken.
I think it curious — and I laugh —
That you should want my autograph.

Kit Morley, Warwick Deeping, Irvin Cobb, Ring Lardner, Joe Hergesheimer, Fanny Hurst, P. G. Wodehouse, Will Rogers, Edgar Lee Masters, Edwin Markham, Robert Frost, Walter de la Mare, Galsworthy, and Harry Leon Wilson are but a few of the assorted literati who likewise were captured. Dr. Henry Van Dyke managed to mate *autograph* with *cat laugh*, while admitting

My scrawling —
S-appalling.

AMONG Miss Bacon's lesser literary figures, Hendrik Willem van Loon has proved a good correspondent, sending bits of essays, travel observations and drawings. There is a vivid snatch of writing in a letter describing to Nancy the fire which destroyed an ancient village near the town of Veere, Holland, on the night of December 7, 1929. Mr. van Loon tells of working with the volunteer firemen until they gave up hope; and after seeing the beautiful old mills and houses go up in smoke, he sat down the same night (without washing his hands, apparently) and wrote to his young friend in America of the irreparable loss. Another note tells of his having worked all night in completing the final chapter of a work on Rembrandt — "a job of twenty years — 1229 pages — and I am afraid nobody will read it. But I had to write it sometime — I am going to bed!"

Many a musician has composed a bar or two of music for her, in lieu of a letter, the notes being drawn neatly above the autograph. Leopold Auer, Vincent D'Indy, Fritz Kreisler, and Rachmaninoff are a few. Her autographs run the gamut of opera singers, stage stars, Government officials, diplomats, and a miscellany which includes the script of Roscoe Pound, Jane Addams, Hamlin Garland, the late Lord Balfour, Augustus John and other famous

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painters, Viscount Byng of Vimy, Lady Astor, Mrs. F. S. Moody, Jr., *née* Wills, Gandhi (the Mahatma, who stopped twisting the British lion's tail long enough to write twice), Orville Wright, and Mussolini. Finally, there is the autograph of Senator Brookhart — placed in juxtaposition with that of Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler!

JOHN'S part of the collection reflects a boy's natural liking for men of action. His prize is a Lindbergh, although those of General Pershing, General Jan Smuts, Kipling, Count von Luckner, Gouraud, Joffre, and Allenby rank high in his estimation. Admiral Richard E. Byrd addresses him familiarly as "Jack"; Admiral Sims composes a limerick. From less active men than these, but desirable for the modern collector, nevertheless, are his various autographs of Coolidge and Hoover, and of the Cabinets of both, along with the complete Supreme Court. The Sultan of Perak, who sent his autograph in both Malay and English, proved a poser; although that ruler is an Oxonian, John remains in doubt as to which is English. Gluyas Williams and the cartoonist Darling ("Ding") illustrated their several letters with animated sketches, while Ellis Parker Butler essays a poetic tap-dance involving the title of his best-known book and a pun on the name Bacon.

What was the charm of this youthful pair of collectors, that these busy people, none of whom they knew and few of whom they had ever seen, delighted in answering their notes? Perhaps it merely attests the understandable but rather pitiful desire of all men, high and low, to achieve whatever additional moiety of immortality they may, by preserving their handwriting wherever they can, even when it is only in an autograph collection of two unknown children. I looked through their heavy volumes respectfully, and noted that one important name was absent: that of H. L. Mencken, the "Sage of Hollins Street," as Baltimoreans call him. I returned home, looked through some letters, found one of H. L. M.'s, clipped out his signature, and sent it — thus assuring him immortality, along with the rest.

MY OWN contribution, however, was but one of the many additions which have been sent by the amazingly large number of friends Nancy has made through correspondence. The autographs of Patrick Henry, Francis Scott Key, Edwin Booth, William Dean Howells, Jules Verne, du Maurier, Ellen Terry, Modjeska, Richard Mansfield, Rosa Bonheur, Mark Twain, and Thomas Hardy have been added in this way. One friend she has never seen sent the scrawl of Prince Bernhard von Bülow, the "second Bismarck," who died after a stormy career, in Rome on October 28, 1929. Above the signature appears the German diplomat's philosophy, tersely expressed: "Bach the Father, Beethoven the Son, Bacchus the Holy Ghost." But to balance this impious expression, the donor also sent a pious injunction from the hand of Harriet Beecher Stowe: "Trust in the Lord, and *do good*." An old sailor has contributed a letter from Jack London, signed also by Mrs. London, de-

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scribing the departure of their ship from the port of Baltimore for a voyage around the Horn, when the greater part of *The Sea Wolf* was to be written. The rover, who died shortly before the beginning of the present Prohibition era, rests happily ignorant of the fact that this ship was later to fall into the hands of rum runners, and subsequently into the hands of the Dry navy, an ignominious fate for a vessel of such romantic history.

PERSONS who have become targets for autograph hunters often develop an admirable system of defense. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle habitually answers requests for signatures with the statement that he will autograph books or photographs for all who will buy £5 worth of books from a certain psychic book shop in London, the address of which he gives. A. A. Milne replies to all such requests from America with a printed card announcing that the creator of Christopher Robin will be happy to send his autograph in return for a check for $2 made payable to an English charity fund for orphans. Emil Ludwig has a somewhat similar answer. Not many authors ignore requests completely.

On the other hand, autograph seekers sometimes adopt novel tactics. They may send a bill to the person whose autograph they desire, to evoke a letter from him disclaiming any purchase or transaction. A hunter in Greensboro, North Carolina, makes a practice of sending his intended victim a photograph, with a request that it be autographed, and as a result of this obvious flattery he now has nearly a thousand signed photographs pasted in his scrapbook, not a few of them being brand new photographs which the subjects have substituted in place of those he sent. Bernard Shaw, with characteristic perversity, signed the photograph on the back; it was returned to him with the explanation that the picture was to be pasted in an album. Mr. Shaw then had his secretary explain in detail a method whereby the collector could cut an opening in the book, to reveal the writing without damaging the likeness.

THE modern autograph collector's interest runs largely to literary names, although there are specialists in other "lines." There is an increasing demand for important artists — etchers, painters, sculptors. Already a good holograph from the hand of James A. McNeill Whistler, bearing both his name signature and the famous butterfly, is a thing to treasure. The collecting of palettes used by well-known painters used to be a hobby of patrons of the arts, and since the majority of artists sign their names on their palettes, frequently adding a brush sketch and an inscription, this is a pretty form of autograph collecting.

With the advance of modern art, it is entirely likely that good autographs of such men as Matisse, Cézanne, Picasso, Degas, and Bellows will eventually fetch higher prices than were originally paid for some canvases by these painters. That of Matisse, especially, is likely to be greatly desired. A short time ago I saw an exceptionally fine letter of his, written to a sister of the late Dr. Claribel Cone, whose Matisse

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collection is probably the most extensive in America. A marvel of exquisite composition, it was a tribute to his former patron. Obviously, this one is not likely to become a collector's item, for it is regarded by its owner as priceless.

Collectors of first and limited editions are generally collectors of autographs, though they naturally prefer that the autographs be entered in books. Among the living American and British authors whose autographs add anywhere from $25 to $100 to the value of a book — depending, of course, on the title edition, and condition of the volume — might be listed Edwin Arlington Robinson, Eugene O'Neill, Edna St. Vincent Millay, E. V. Lucas, Edgar Lee Masters, James Joyce, James Branch Cabell, Norman Douglas, Christopher Morley (*The Eighth Sin*), and Theodore Dreiser.

THE mention of Cabell reminds me of his rarest item, and of my own part in aiding and abetting its publication. During my undergraduate days in a Southern University, I was a member (indeed, the organizer) of a group of nine convivial spirits who used to hold forth weekly in an old inn, called, due to its odd architectural design, the Cat's Head. There our gatherings flourished wickedly under the name of the Cat's Head Club. Our coterie included several graduate students, several undergraduates, a journalist, a professor of the drama (who has since sold his soul to Mammon and his talents to Hollywood), and two doctors of literature. Our quarters were picturesque and decidedly ramshackle — a ratty, smoky, dingy, draughty, and altogether charming old nook which reared its gabled roof up to the protecting arms of ancient oak trees. Rumors were wafted about amongst the *unco guid* in the community that strange and unhallowed rituals took place there, and it was popularly supposed that we kept a charred barrel (constantly replenished) of corn whiskey, which is the wine of the land. Stories about hasheesh, no doubt inspired by the sight of the long white clay pipes which the members were seen puffing upon, circulated round the campus and decent folk rolled their eyes heavenward and said: "*That* comes of reading the French decadents!" There was talk of Suppressed Works and Unexpurgated Editions. . . .

THEN one day word was bruited up and down that the Cat's Head bunch were going to publish a Book! And in due time the book appeared: a tiny volume, handsomely printed and bearing the unblushing imprimatur of the Cat's Head Press. It was *Retractions*, that superb sonnet sequence of Cabell's, and it was limited to twelve — *twelve* — numbered and signed copies, one for each member, two for the author, and one for the Cat's Head Library, wherein was to be placed also such correspondence as we had had with Mr. Cabell.

Details of this first publishing venture (incidentally, our last) remain very vivid. The selection of the paper, the style of type, the design and format — all were given painstaking consideration. Then the printer refused to contract for less than twenty-five copies, which necessitated the destruction of thirteen, for we were resolved on an edition of

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a round dozen and no more. Finally twelve select copies were sent to Dumbarton Grange to receive the kind offices of the creator of the sonnets. Back they came, each carefully autographed and numbered in the neat, small hand which the author of the lively Poictesme romances has cultivated. The original nine members of the club have scattered widely and are not likely to gather again, but each treasures, along with pleasant memories of evenings profitably spent in the old inn, a bit of Cabellana sufficient to arouse the cupidity of any collector. Nor was autograph itch responsible for its creation. One thought, however, tortures me and will not let me rest: What became of that library copy of *Retractions?* We really had no library, properly speaking, but kept our meagre assortment of books on a single long shelf, surrounded by odds and ends of stuff, most of it worthless. Has this little document been scribbled over by some later student and tossed away, to be swept up and burned on the ash-pile by Uncle Jeff, the venerable negro janitor? Or will it turn up one day in a sale, to be purchased by someone ignorant of the pleasant days which brought it forth? I wonder.

## Wild Iris

By Virginia Moore

To make a perfect iris
The heavens proffered tears,
And all of nature practised
A hundred thousand years.

So now it blossoms thickly
Along a country stream,
Blue enough for hurting,
Tender in extreme.

And greedily I take it
With grown-up eyes that look
To summer and to winter,
To desolated brook.

How long must I be waiting
For iris in a string?
An age? A Buddhic cycle?
Or just another spring?

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# Silver Lotus

By H. M. K. Smith

*A Short Story by the Author of "The Smile of Buddha"*

It was the marriage day of the Son of Yoryaku, Emperor of ancient Nippon, and all imperial Yeddo was a blaze of color, of music, pageantry and joy. The youthful bride, favored of the gods, had been selected with mystic formulas and stately ceremony from among the seven hundred daughters of the Shoguns and the Samurai. For the full cycle of the spring moon, the bride and her retinue had been housed in a porcelain palace whose courts were paved with jade and whose secluded chambers had been especially prepared for her alone.

The roadway between this palace and the castle of the Mikado was sprinkled daily with fine white sand from Enoshima, mingled with green pine needles, the seeds of anise and the dust of sandalwood; while from the hour of the dawn, which drifted in on a haze of powdered amber from the Inland Seas to the misty, purple dusk, long stately processions from far off provinces of the Empire passed over this perfumed pathway bearing gifts and offerings intended for the unseen and royal bride.

On the day before, a tablet of gold in a wrapping of scented crimson silk, had been sent to the bride, upon which had been inscribed the edict which made of her a princess of the Mikado's sacred household. With it had been sent symbolic gifts of boiled rice, branches of the holy *sakaki* tree, chestnuts on plates of willow wood, salt, sandalwood and wine. Today the prince-bridegroom himself would escort her to the ancestral altars of his fathers in a palanquin of ebony with curtains of scarlet and silver and borne by retainers whose first born had been sons and in which, as a good omen, a man-child must first ride as well.

Even now, the roadways were lined to the walls with the smiling, happy faces of those who had come to do homage to their lord and prince, Prince Uli, "Uli" which means "the sea." The upper shutters of every house were closed and the balconies were empty, for no man might look downward nor gaze at all upon the countenances of the children of the Goddess of the Sun, but each façade was gay with banners of every hue, with greenery and lanterns, with prayers for good fortune and for joy, and the white flag of Nippon with its red and glowing sun.

The crowd surged and billowed in

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breaking waves of color and of sound. Here a group of laborers in dark blue *hakamas;* there a cluster of Buddhist and Shinto priests with shaven heads; here a company of merchants and their wives in sombre robes of purple and brown. Children darted about in bright kimonos, their hands full of *sakaki* plumes and cherry blossoms.

And here, like some windblown tropic garden in a prismatic, opulent bloom stood row upon row of geisha and orian, scarlet butterflies, flowers of the night, Aphrodites of the dusk, permitted by edict on this festive day to mingle freely with the world. Some were clad in strident, flaming red with gold and silver obis tied in front to signify their sad and ancient calling. One in lavender silk, heavy with iris embroidered in lilac, darker purples and the dregs of wine. One in stiff magenta brocade with swarms of silver butterflies, one in apricot with figures of golden storks; some in gold and silver, in canary, in orange, in turquoise, in garnet, in coral and emerald green, and here one but a child in years, Silver Lotus, fragile and slender in clouds of filmy silver where floated silver lotus flowers on leaves of shining gold.

Her face seemed molded of translucent white jade and her brows, outlined with antimony in the blackest jet, were as fine and soft as the feathers of the kingfisher. Her hands, long and delicate, her fingers like wax tapers, white as frost. Her eyes, oblique and heavy lidded, were enormously dark and deeply shadowed with something hidden and hauntingly sad. Her reed-like child's body was drowned within the flowing folds of her extravagant robes. Her long silvery kimono clung to her slender ankles, but parting there, revealed an undergarment of jade pink silk which spread into a rolled and heavily padded train about her white, tabi-clad feet. Across her back her golden obi spread almost to her shoulders like a great tawny butterfly and over her heart she wore a tiny butterfly of deep, rose-colored jade.

Silently she stood among her laughter-gay and chattering sisters of the orian, so small, so stately, so curiously virginal and pure, and yet so childishly and tragically sad. For today, she was *shinzo* — she was *shinzo* and she was afraid. Last night O-Mise, her home in the glittering Yoshiwara, had been tawdry with paper flowers and heavy with incense and with musk. Gifts of wine cups with her name inscribed upon them had been presented to all those who had called to wish her good fortune and a long and merry life. The house was filled with laughter and coarse and ribald jests.

She was no longer a *hang-yoku*, a child dancer, for her apprenticeship was over. She had learned to dance and sing, to play the samisen, the koto and the drum, to use a fan, to arrange flowers, the ancient ceremonial of tea, to be gracious, alluring, seductive to men, and now she was *shinzo* — a new ship to be launched upon a hopeless sea. Her name had been inscribed upon the portals of the house as "*O-shoku-kabu,*" a new beauty for every man to see. Clothed in a peacock-hued kimono, her hair fantastically dressed in the fashion of Shimada, her mouth turned into a

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vermilion flower on a bed of snow, Silver Lotus, attended by two female pages and a man servant, had been publicly paraded through the streets in a 'ricksha deluged with garlands of cherry blossoms, pine branches and strings of silver bells.

Gravely she bowed to the right and to the left and smiled, but beneath her bright silks, cold, benumbing fear laid icy finger tips upon her heart. She was — *shinzo*. With admiration and applause she had been greeted by men standing before the houses and shops decked for the marriage day of their Emperor's son with all the emblems of good fortune and long life. Ropes of braided rice straw, mystic symbol of the Goddess of the Sun, pine branches for good luck, fern leaves for the fecundity of the bride, crawfish for long life, bitter oranges for plenty and for wealth, bamboo for fidelity, paper *gohei* lanterns, birds and flowers.

She made her way through double rows of amber lanterns, 'rickshas passed her with triple lamps twinkling, wayfarers with white fairy-like lanterns bobbing at the end of bamboo wands. Always smiling gravely, she bowed to the salutations of the crowd, but still her heart was heavy with that foreboding fear. From a balcony came the tinkling sound of samisen, the thrum of koto and the soft throb of spool shaped geisha drums. As she sped through the dim streets now, quaint shadows quivered on the opaque paper *shoji*, the windows of the houses, lighted from within. A man bathing in a low round tub, a woman with a child at her breast, two lovers kissing, children hovering over a glowing brazier — a panorama of that homely, humble human life that she would never know, flashed by in black, quick moving silhouette. And then again, high towering gates of blue and gilt, the clang of cymbals, men calling her name, reaching out to touch her, her name emblazoned there upon the portals, the Yoshiwara, home!

And tonight? She shuddered so that Yamabuki, the yellow rose, asked her if she were cold, but Silver Lotus only smiled, shook her head and looked away again.

Tonight the O-Mise would be thronged with men, men strange and brutal and inflamed with saké and with desire. And she must drink with them and dance with them, those dances which before had seemed to her so lovely and so pure. Dances that she must make tonight, one maddening, alluring posture of soft inviting body, of white caressing hands, springing pink-tipped like lilies from great leaf-like sleeves; of bending, swaying form on feet that never moved, quivering sensuous lips, soft, passion inviting eyes, perfumed hair, and the queer irregular rhythm of blood-stirring, seductive songs.

And then some man would whisper to her *kamuro*, her female page, and she would hear a shrill voice calling — "*Hasu-jin-O-Meshikan*" ("Silver Lotus — honorably change thy garments"). She would lay aside her gorgeous formal raiment and return clad only in her long under dress of thin, revealing silk to exchange cups of saké with the man who had marked her with his favor, the man to whom

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she must be the unholy bride of a night. More music, more cups of fiery saké, samisens rising to a strident crescendo and then — another shrill command from her *kamuro*.

And now she must lead the way through the long, dim gallery overlooking the garden where dwarf pines seemed to writhe among the gray stone lanterns in an agony akin to her own. She must push aside the door of painted lacquer to reveal her little vestal chamber with its bamboo screen, its single lantern, its bronze *hibachi* where dying charcoal glowed, its soft scarlet *futon*, with its coverlet of black wool. She would kneel in one last appeal before the goddess Benten; the air would be heavy with fumes of saké and the whispering of a man. A covering of heavy silk would be thrown over the lantern, the room would be in darkness. And tomorrow? Tomorrow she too would tie her obi in front.

YAMABUKI, the yellow rose, eager-eyed and chattering, tugged at her silver sleeve, recounting how when the bride in her closed palanquin reached the home of her lord, they would place uncoined gold and silver in her hands, and cross them upon her breast so that she might still hold a golden vase of wheat, maize and rice with emeralds, sapphires and rubies to symbolize the richness and the fruitfulness of the earth. That then she would cross the threshold over a golden saddle and bronze baskets of glowing embers kindled from cherry wood and at last, escorted by singers and the music of silver harps and drums she would enter the bridal chamber. There she and her lord would drink nine times from golden goblets joined with red cords and filled with wine and honey and so consummating their marriage, would be left alone.

But Silver Lotus did not listen, for her thoughts were far away.

* * * *

SHE was in Kamakura once again on that pilgrimage which she had made in a gesture of reverence on the anniversary of her blind mother's death, her blind mother for whose sake, at the age of ten, she had sold herself in secret to the Yoshiwara. She had hidden the price of that sacrifice under the pillow of her sleeping mother and crept away, and then in only another year her mother had gone into the place of souls.

Under the towering cryptomeria trees she had knelt before that majestic Buddha which for untold centuries had sat unmoved, looking with eyes of gold as calmly upon death as he looked upon life.

While bells from the temple echoed their deep-throated sounds, among the pines another pilgrim had knelt beside her in the still and early morning and there came to her in a voice as deep and resonant as the temple bells the words — "*Namu-amie-daibutsu-Buddha.*"

She had looked upon him then, and as she looked her troubled childish heart was comforted and stilled. Tall he was and grave and bronzed and young. His whole person breathed of the majesty and vastness of the sea. He wore the sombre *burisode* of the pilgrim, but about his neck upon a chain of fine gold he wore the amulet of those who are of

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the sea, a little emblem of coral, the figure of a fish.

There was about him the strength and surety of the tides, the clean coldness of spindrift flung on great free winds, the tranquillity of still waters under a summer moon. He knelt beside her and turned his face to hers. He looked with calm serenity into her tear marked eyes, but Silver Lotus could not speak. All her life seemed suddenly revealed to her as it was to be in its tinsel fragility, its loneliness, its sadness and its shame.

And then he spoke. His voice came as soft and deep as the sound of sea wind in the pines, and as he spoke the heart of Silver Lotus was loosed of loneliness and pain. "Dost thou, too, seek peace, *Hana-Chisi*, little flower?" he asked and took her gently by the hand.

TOGETHER they wandered through the fragrant gloom, the tall grave pilgrim and the woman-child, and came in their wanderings upon a little shrine hidden in the deep, green secrecy of feathery bamboos. Here in a posture of supplication before a moss-grown figure of Kwannon the Merciful, was the statue of a woman, weatherbeaten, crude. And in the dim greenness the pilgrim told Silver Lotus the tale of the origin of this statue, concerning a woman who had once loved a holy man. From a far-distant monastery, on a scroll of rice paper, the man had sent her every day some word of peace and comfort for her longing soul. She too had written to him: "My love lives through eternity. It will not die when I have passed into the land of shadows, it will live for always. I have drunk of love's immortal cup and it will give me immortality, so that I may live with the gods to watch over thee and care for thee through all of time."

The story was that when she had felt herself dying she had taken from their secret place all his treasured scrolls and kneading them into a paste with her tears, had fashioned of it this figure of infinite love and sadness which knelt here forever before the all-merciful Kwannon, invoking protection for the man whom she had loved.

THE pilgrims now walked into the gardens of the iris, iris so white and pure that they seemed unearthly flowers of spiritual beauty able to take the thoughts of men from things of earth to things supernal and forever true. Unspeakably lovely was Silver Lotus as she flitted like some radiant human butterfly there where the tremulous shadows of the willows played like faint ghosts of beauty in the still and drowsy waters. The dark eyes of her companion lingered upon her and he smiled.

Under the aged blossoming cherry trees which hovered like clouds of rose-flushed gauze upon the green hillside, they sat in silence on the soft green turf. The paths were thickly drifted with pink and white petals that floated gently to the grass like sun-tinted flakes of snow. The plum trees too were veiled like brides in fragrant white for their marriage to the spring and as pink and white petals drifted softly down and fell like spirit kisses on Silver Lotus's eyelids, she turned to the silent dreaming figure by her side and asked him softly, "Honorable Master, what is love?"

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He looked upon her calmly, and from his grave eyes his glance was like the sea. He smiled upon her, and the smile fell upon her heart as gently as spring rain falls upon the flowers.

"Love — little flower — is none other than the great, deep rhythm of life. It is that out of which you came and to which you must return. You see the one you love before you and you believe him to be that toward which the rhythm of life is driving you. But even when you are one with him, when you have thrilled to the touch of his hands and the warmth of his lips, you will still feel that rhythm within you, asking and unappeased. Then it is that into the souls of the man and woman there arises a great sadness and they look at one another and say Where is our love? The hot desire dies and beauty fades like the flowers in autumn. Then they should clasp each other by the hand and move on through the still joys of life like two white clouds which float for a little side by side, and vanish, as though wafted by the same wind, into the infinite blue of the heavens.

"For only when this life is ended may you be in absolute union with the one you love, in a union full and eternal which neither time nor space may sever, for you are then but one single, pure and infinite soul in that great rhythm from which you came and to which you have once more returned."

Silently again he took her by the hand and led her to the sea. There for a long time they sat in utter stillness, fingers entwined: "See how the waters of the deep draw near, the sea who is your brother even as are the trees, the sun, the moon, the stars. Ah, if men would but let their lives flow of themselves as rivers flow to the sea, as leaves tremble on the branches, as lotus flowers bloom, in the simple, natural rhythmic beauty of life. But men blind themselves with pleasure, with desire and lust, with riches, hate and fame. They hold fast to all that is unreal, they desire too many things to find the One.

"The sea is rest. And the souls of those who sleep in its depths, never leave the sea. It is their white hands waving the breakers, their white faces smiling from the whirling foam and on still nights they call to each other over the echoing waters of the deep."

And the little waves crept toward them softly on the full flooding tide with the quiet irresistible approach of infinity, of fate. "Hark to the sea," he whispered, "the sea is singing, little flower. Behold how the waves flow on one after the other, further and further, only to return again and vanish in the endless music of the deep."

Silver Lotus looked out to sea where the sails of two little boats gleamed like old silver in the quiet sunlight, those boats so small on the immensity of the sea, so fearless and so lovely, so buoyant and so free. The sea, as boundless and as pure as that love of which the pilgrim spoke. Ah, if she might but float out there with him; if they might but let their lives flow on simply and in peace as the sea flows, as the cherry blossoms fall, as the clouds float.

(Yamabuki touched her hand again and her eyes glowed. "Do you

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not hear the cymbals and the drums? They will soon be here." But again Silver Lotus, in her dreaming, did not hear.)

The moon had risen and her beams danced with their shadows in the dark crowns of the softly undulating pines. Only the great bronze Buddha was flooded in her full and frosty splendor. Immeasurably tender and gravely kind he looked down upon his worshippers as they knelt once more before the shrine. That pure countenance gazing into eternity was utter rest, the sadly blessing smile about the shadowy lips was absolute love.

The pilgrim turned his bronzed young face once more upon the wondering child and kissed her as a father might kiss his little one, upon the brow. He smiled upon her and it seemed to Silver Lotus that light laughed over the earth. From the folds of his girdle he drew forth the little amulet of rose jade, the little butterfly, the emblem of love, and placed it in her hand. He raised his hand over her head with the thumb crossed over the palm and said softly, "That which is done for Buddha lives forever. That which is done for self, must surely die." He was gone then and only a whispered *sayonara*, a last farewell lingered in the shadow-fretted air.

* * * *

A RUMBLE of drums, the ringing clash of cymbals, the shrill wailing of reed pipes and silver flutes, the sonorous clang of gongs of brass and bronze, rang in a martial chorus through the air and the bridal procession of the Emperor's son drew near.

Musicians in plumed helmets and robes of yellow and white, retainers in scarlet, carrying on standards tablets of blue and silver inscribed with the titles of the bride and groom. Soldiers with shields of leather and bamboo; acolytes with long black wands tipped with gold and silver melons; Shinto priests in robes of gray, green and red; and bishops in saffron with great cloaks of purple, carrying reliquaries of crystal.

THEN appeared in a great golden shrine and standing on a base of rock crystal supported by eight great tortoises of green malachite, a figure of Ameterasu, the Goddess of the Sun, followed by a great concourse of two-sworded Samurai in brilliantly variegated robes and shining armor, Shoguns, governors, ministers, in richly colored robes of state. Then in a gilded coach glittering with emblems of the sun and drawn by thirty milk-white horses, the bridegroom, son of the Mikado, Prince Uli himself.

In the shadow of the massive, graying trunk of a venerable cherry tree stood Silver Lotus, but she did not as the others bow her head. She knew that to look upon that face was death and yet she could not move. She stood rooted fast, immovable as the *enoki* trees on Fujiyama's holy hills. Her eyes, which she could not close, were wide but unafraid, and then she looked into the face of that one who rode in the chariot of gold. In black ceremonial robes of state with golden crests, with the bridegroom's headdress and the sacred signs of Shinto painted on his brow, he turned his face and his grave, deep eyes rested upon her,

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eyes as deep and black as the abode of death. Straightly she looked into them and deeply, as he raised his hand in a gesture of benediction with the thumb crossed over the palm. For the eyes of Uli, Prince of Nippon, Son of the Emperor, were the eyes of that grave young pilgrim of the sea who had knelt beside her before the shrine of Buddha in the shadow of Kamakura's pines.

And as on that quiet day, now as she looked deeply into those grave, dark eyes, her fear was gone; but there came into her being a sort of exalting terror and her soul saw for the first time what happiness might mean. It was light, clear, crystal light, and she had been blind. It was warm, golden sunshine, and she had been cold. It was a flame soaring from her heart to his. The world was filled with amber fire and singing voices, high and beautiful, like the songs of the bulbuls in the plum trees. All things were strange, and for the first time, she lived. It was the essence of everything. Of heaven and earth, of life and death, of man and woman, it was nameless and beautiful, it was joy and sadness, it was that deep eternal rhythm which was life, it was more than life — it was Love.

As though it rang from silver bells with tongues of jade, she knew that it was not her body which was *shinzo* — it was her soul.

And then she fell face downward in the dust of anise and sandalwood and so she lay, until raised up by her companions. All was comprehensible now, all was light. It came to her as to a child who finds a flower. Nothing was lost. That thing of beauty which she had treasured would live on, for she would make it live forever. She would give herself even as that one who had loved the holy man. She would make herself immortal too, so that she might be eternally with him, the one she loved, Prince Uli, which means the sea.

The sea which he loved, the sea which sang songs to him which other ears had never heard. The sea in which the dead did not die but lived forever, the sea in which she might dance on and on, waving white hands to him and singing the songs he loved.

In her chamber in the Yoshiwara, she drew the paper *shoji* close. Seven times she bathed in clear water as brides bathe, and sprinkled rice in the four corners of the room. She clothed herself from head to foot in fresh and spotless white, and then in the dusk she stole into the garden, plaiting, as she went, a chaplet of white wistaria for her hair.

In the dimness of the temple, sunk now in mauve and silent gloom in the shadow of pillars of black and gold, she crept to the altar whose silver vases and lacquered drums reflected the wavering lights of the numberless candles which burned in silence before the tablets of the dead.

In an alcove whose walls were painted with peonies and lotus flowers she knelt before a shrine. From the great sleeves of her alabaster kimono she drew offerings of incense, which gave off the odor of lotus, the "Flower of the Pure Law." She laid her samisen upon the floor and over her head and face she drew a scarlet veil. Upon the paved floor she laid a square of scarlet silk and at each

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corner she placed a green twig of the *sakaki* tree. Then from her voluminous sleeves she drew two clusters of tiny silver bells and, bowing to the floor, nine times she touched her forehead to the stones. Then to the cold, metallic accompaniment of fragile silver bells she began, with exaggerated and rigid slowness, the movements of the ritual dance of purification.

Slowly she moved through the austere and stately measures of the holy dance, her movements timed by the chaste, spiritual music of those tiny silver bells. Pure, mournful melody, sad little sounds as of pearls falling on the muted strings of a *hoko* of *paulowina* wood, the sound of frozen tears falling in a crystal chalice.

THEN with a last sudden shower of those tears of silver sound, she sank again to the floor and once again, nine times she touched her forehead to the stones. On her dark head, the white wisteria made a little halo of alabaster stars.

"O — Ameterasu — Holy One — wash me clean of all impurity, as one washes away all unclean things in the river of Kamo," she intoned.

Behind the old gray temple, three willows stood upon a narrow point of sand that stretched far out to sea. When the tide was at its flood, the waves rose to the feet of the willows and their long, weeping branches dripped with bitter waters.

The moon shone faintly through a mist like a wan spy, as a little figure stole past *enoki* trees and rocks out to the point where the three willows waited for the tide. Her head was crowned with white wistaria and she was clothed from head to foot in spotless white.

From the dark shadows under the willow trees came the sound of a samisen and of a high, sweet voice singing a plaintive song. The white clad figure advanced and walked outward to where the waters rose and broke upon the tide's advancing flood.

AT THE water's edge, Silver Lotus drew from wide sleeves two tiny saké cups joined to each other with a long scarlet cord. She filled them from a flaçon of Satsuma. Nine times she drank from one, the other she flung into the sea. "My love lives through eternity," she whispered. "I have drunk of Love's immortal cup and it will give me immortality so that I too shall live forever, here in the sea to watch over thee and care for thee for all of time." She gathered a handful of dried sea grass and kindled it from her lantern's flame. She stepped over it and as it flared up for an instant, she took up her samisen once more and began to sing.

The wind stirred the willows' long waving fronds and carried the high sweet voice of Silver Lotus, far, far out to sea.

Seawood and sinking sands,
Willow wood with mourning bands,
Whose voice so high,
Calling?

The moon pierced through the curtain of thin gray clouds, a few strayed and lonely stars appeared. Water splashed over the white clad feet and tore at the white silks above them, but still the figure moved on.

Gray sea and grayer clouds,
Gray ghosts in snowy shrouds,
Is it the sea gull's cry,
Calling?

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Little silver-tipped waves curled about the child's waist. She held her samisen still higher and the dirge-like and plaintive song went on.

> White hands that beckon me,
> I kiss my hands to thee,
> I know thy voice, O, Death,
> Calling.

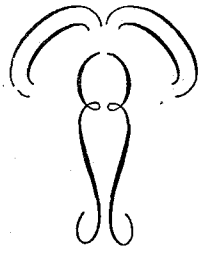
An amulet of deep rose jade, a butterfly, was pressed now to her lips, lips white but untrembling.

"*Anata-konata*," she whispered as though she were a bride. And as the waters rose higher, the scarlet veil swirled away in a little circling whirlpool, red as blood.

"*Amaterasu — Omikani — yo*" — a white face floated for an instant in green billows, floated for an instant like a lotus blossom and then was gone. The little silver-tipped waves flowed smoothly on.

The moon broke through at last in all her full and splendid silver radiance and made a pathway of shimmering glory into the far reaches of the boundless, ever-flowing sea. Upon it floated a broken samisen, a chaplet of white wisteria, a whirling crimson veil.

From the turf-crowned, moated ramparts of the Emperor's castle came the boom of great bronze cannon and the silver blare of nuptial trumpets echoed over the sea.



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# Is Life Worth Living?

By Florence Finch Kelly

*Revealing Answers to an Informal Questionnaire*

What does this modern age think about it? Does it find that the pleasures and satisfactions of life nowadays compensate for its pains and disillusions and disappointments? The years have stripped away some of the things in which our forefathers found compensation and if they have brought material satisfactions in richer variety and quantity they have so sharpened and increased desire that probably no previous generation has ever demanded so much of life as do the people who now fill its stage with their hustling activities. How does what they enjoy balance with the ills that forever make themselves felt in this business of living?

It has been a long time since any one tried to survey the scene as a whole and give a large-horizoned answer to that insistent doubt, "Is it worth what it costs?" Half a century ago the English philosopher, W. H. Mallock, wrote a book entitled, *Is Life Worth Living?* in which he discussed the question philosophically and, by deductive reasoning, came to a negative conclusion. In those mid-Victorian days life was thought to have an inherent value, a sort of sacredness as of a gift from God, that almost tainted with sacrilege such a question and such an answer. All the English-reading world was a bit shaken and aghast, its spokesmen inclined to deprecate such an inquiry. Even on remote college campuses in this country young people read and discussed the book, and felt satisfyingly audacious. And newspapers chronicled an increased number of suicides. Then *Punch* sardonically remarked, "It depends on the liver;" and all the English-reading world laughed and quickly forgot about its momentary doubt.

Nowadays the world would pay scant attention to such abstract discussion of a practical matter, for it has learned that truth is more likely to be found in conclusions reasoned from collected and compared facts than in theories spun out of anybody's brain. So, when I began to wonder how the modern world feels in the depths of its heart about the old question, as old as Adam, it seemed to me that the only way to get a worth while answer would be to collect individual responses and secure a body of material from which it might be possible to draw some general conclusions.

For several years I have been asking people directly and indirectly—getting at their convictions in one

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way or another — if to them individually life is worth living, if its satisfactions recompense them for its inevitable pains and disappointments and, if so, what special experiences yield them most pleasure — what, in short, they find in life that above all helps to make it worth while. Since my inquiries were confined to my own circle of friends and acquaintances, mostly professional people, the investigation does not afford a cross-section of life. But its results do show certain definite and significant trends, and since what people of intelligence think and say, believe and do, always influences the tendencies of a time, perhaps my collection of responses has some value as a slight illuminant of what is, after all, the keynote of the civilization of any age — its attitude toward life.

IN SORTING out and classifying the answers to my queries I have preserved especially those that were typical of replies made by many people, those that were strongly individual and those that struck unusual notes. Studying them as a whole it has seemed to me that the most significant feature of the collection is a conviction expressed in one form or another by so great a number as to make it almost universal. If what these many persons said to me is a fair indication of modern human feeling then more people get their chief satisfaction in life out of work than from any other source. Here are a few typical answers:

"Life would be decidedly dull for me," said one middle-aged man, "if I did not have the constant stimulus of the thousand and one demands that my work makes upon me every day, and so I suppose that, considering everything, it is my work that gives me the deepest, steadiest and most dependable satisfaction."

"A good job that you are interested in, that calls out the best you have in you and gives you an adequate material return," was another answer to my query.

SAID a woman who is very successful in her profession: "The thing that makes life most worth living for me is having a job that keeps me on the jump all the time, with all my mental powers alert and active, and yet is always just a little ahead of my best efforts to keep up with its possibilities." An ambitious young naval officer phrased much the same idea, but from a different viewpoint, when he said: "You've got to have some objective ahead of you, some point you want to attain, something to work toward that, when you reach it, resolves into something still more desirable farther on; or else life is stale and flat and not worth the trouble. But it's full of zest if you have an incentive of that sort." This frequent reference to the daily task, the life job, as a dominant factor in the worthiness of life made me wonder if man is about to find the road to that happiness for which he has sought so long.

Of the many people that I questioned there were only two who said definitely and decidedly that life was not worth living. One was an elderly woman to whom life has denied many of the things she has asked of it, who has fed rather meagrely at the table of this world's good things while she longed for a full and varied menu, and she insisted with caustic bitterness

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that nothing life had given her had compensated, or could possibly make amends, for the pain, the sadness and the injury these deprivations had caused her. The other instance was in its premises in such direct opposition to this that it was doubly interesting. A young man, gifted, in full health, of satisfactory personal life, a poet and a successful writer, maintained with deeply-rooted conviction that life does not and can not offer enough dependable satisfactions to make it worth while. He said that the allurements it leads you on with disappoint you when you get them, that nothing you work for proves to be what you expect, that inevitable disillusion cheapens and poisons all your effort. When I asked him why he continued to carry on in the face of what he felt to be such futility, he said that the habit of living and of trying to use one's faculties is so deeply ingrained in man that he can not go counter to it without making an even worse mess of his life. "I am," he said, "simply taking the line of least resistance, the easiest way out of an inherently and inevitably evil predicament."

THERE were many answers to my question that were noteworthy because of their varied individual viewpoints. They were a revelation both of the number and variety of the *stimuli* with which life incites the human being and of the zestful response which man makes to all of them. A man whose life, well past its middle, has given him many ups and downs, grinned happily and said: "Sure! Life is worth living because it's such a gamble! I get the same kind of a kick out of it that I do out of a good poker game. Your hand may look rotten, but maybe you can make it win if you play it right, and there's always another hand coming when the cards may run your way. Life's more interesting than any poker game I ever sat in, and I shan't want to quit it even when I have to."

"IT's love that makes life worth while for me," exclaimed a woman who has lived long enough to test many of its values. "As long as there is anybody I can love and anybody to love me — husband, children, relatives, friends — I shall enjoy and cherish life and want to keep right on living. But I shall want to die at once if the time ever comes when there isn't any one to love and be loved by." A young engineer, keen on his profession, declared promptly that he found life very much worth living chiefly because of the pleasure he got out of the beauty there is in the world. "It's everywhere," he said, "and there are so many kinds of it, made by man and made by nature, and it means so much to me that if everything else disappointed me it would still, I believe, make life worth while."

A successful artist whose path has led through pleasant places discussed the values of life, cast aside one after another of the usual sources of satisfaction as not being for him the one big thing that most made it worth while, and finally settled down to this conviction: "I believe I get more pleasure and satisfaction out of what I can do with my muscles, my body, in outdoor sports and all sorts of activities that call them into play, than I do out of anything else. I am quite sure that if I were to lose my

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physical strength and skill I would not care to go on living."

It was a woman of middle age, a writer of novels, who gave me this answer: "Yes, I find life very much worth while because it is so full of things that interest me — people, perhaps, most of all. I like to study them and figure out motives and purposes, and there's always a fresh thrill in meeting and feeling out some new person. Furthermore there are so many other charming and fascinating things in it — books, music, flowers, birds, sunsets, trees, pictures, news from all over the world and beautiful places to go to! Oh, I don't see how anybody can help loving and enjoying life when it is so full of such rich and varied pleasures! I think it was Bacon who said that the more good things we are interested in the more ardently we live. And, of course, the more ardently we live the more we find life worth while."

A MAN in the latter part of middle age brought out the changing values of life as the years advance: "Life has always afforded me," he said, "keen pleasure and deep satisfaction. I've had my share of its pains and disappointments but there has never been a time when these were not overbalanced by enjoyments. But the things that have made it most worth while have been different at different times, as mental and spiritual development and those changes which the years bring altered my outlook on life and my response to it. Ever since I passed my fortieth year, I have found an increasing pleasure in books. I have always enjoyed reading, not as a passive but as an active mental occupation — feeling my mind at work — but until I got well into middle life other kinds of satisfactions were dominant. Now, in my early sixties, and still enjoying most of the things that have heretofore given me pleasure, I have come to where my deepest and most satisfying pleasure in life is to get into communication through the printed page with some skilled mind highly endowed with intellect and imagination and enjoy its wrestlings with the problems of man and the universe and its interpretations of the beauties of life and the world."

A WOMAN nearing the age that is called "elderly," who has brought up a family, successfully practised a profession and engaged in other activities and so has lived a full and active life both inside and outside her home, said that she had found life richly interesting and rewarding. When I asked her what among all her satisfactions had made life most worth while, she promptly and emphatically replied: "Children — my own offspring. I didn't realize this clearly in my younger days but about the time I entered middle life I began to understand that the deepest and greatest and most abiding happiness I should ever find would be in seeing my children develop, enter upon their own lives and careers, and themselves become parents. Of course, children disappoint and hurt you in a thousand ways and each one of them is likely to break your heart. But when all is said and done the deep satisfaction and pleasure of having children, watching and helping their growth, and seeing the torch of life passed on through them to other generations, far more than

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compensates not only for all the heartbreaks they cause you but for all the pains and ills life brings you in other ways."

Carefully considering the question, a man of middle age replied with deep conviction: "I think the most abiding satisfaction I get out of life is in being able now and then to be of service to some one who badly needs a friend. Yes, I am sure there is nothing that so fully compensates for all the things life does to us that we don't like as does the knowledge that I have helped some other human being through a hard place which might have been too much for him if I hadn't been there. I don't mean helping with money — I haven't much that I can use that way — but just standing by, doing what I can, and making him feel that I am his friend."

THE thoughtfully considered response of one man seemed to me especially interesting because so probably typical of the feeling of great numbers of people of the average sort, those who carry on the major part of the work of humanity. "I don't think," he said, after turning the question over in his mind for a few moments, "that it has ever occurred to me to question seriously the general happiness and worth of life, because you get some sort of satisfaction out of almost every stage and phase of it. Even the disappointments and hurts are not without compensation, for they give contrast to the pleasurable things and so make keener our enjoyment of them. Many happy experiences, most of them small and inconsequential by themselves, but summing up mighty big, come right along, all the time, as part of every day, experiences that grow out of almost everything in life — one's home, friends, work, married life, children, the things one sees and does — that I don't understand how anybody can have any doubt about it. Just living it makes life worth while."

I hoped in the course of my inquiry to get some revealing light on the question of whether or not women who have chosen an individual career in preference to marriage remain satisfied with their choice. But I found them unwilling to make unequivocal statement of their final conclusions concerning the relative desirability of matrimony and the pleasures yielded by pursuit of their own bent. The nearest I came to getting a direct answer was from two women of middle age, fairly successful in their professions and economically independent, who each told me — they were unknown to each other, of different callings and of different temperaments and environment — that she had never married because she had not wanted to be hampered by having children and that she had never regretted her decision.

FOR the most part, these unmarried, professional women talked about the keen and varied interests their work brought them, they spoke with enthusiasm of their freedom to follow their own plans and programmes, develop their own individualities, live their own lives, and they seemed to find satisfaction in being able to retreat into their own tiny homes in apartment houses and enjoy there a complete privacy which no one else had the right to disturb. But

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they evaded the question of whether or not they thought these things more fruitful of deep and worth while satisfaction than what they had given up to get them. I noted that women of this category were almost sure to declare they found life's chief pleasure and richest recompense in their work and its significance for them. It seems to me an interesting feature of modern life that so many intelligent and cultivated women should thus find the greatest enjoyment of life outside of their personal relations and their emotional reactions.

And, indeed, it was surprising to find how few people appeared to derive satisfaction in large measure from the intimate personal relations of life. Several parents even spoke of their disappointment in not finding in parenthood the pleasures they had expected. By far the big majority of the persons I talked with gave as the most important elements of their enjoyment of life other factors than those rising out of the ordinary personal sources of happiness.

I BELIEVE this would not have been true two generations ago when Mallock wrote his philosophical discussion of life's worth and decided against it. In those days I am sure most people would have mentioned marriage, home, parenthood, filial and other family relations as unquestionable sources of the most important joys of living. In the secret depths of their hearts perhaps they might not have thought so, but they would have considered it the proper and decent thing to say. That fact marks another divergence between their day and ours. The comforts and assurances of religion would undoubtedly have been another frequent answer in Mallock's time. But not one of all the people with whom I talked mentioned religious faith as affording any part of their satisfactions in life. I doubt very much also whether there would have been, fifty or sixty years ago, so striking a balance in favor of the joys of work, of the happiness springing out of devotion to an agreeable job.

PERHAPS the most significant conclusion that can be drawn from my survey of modern feeling about the worth of life, and I think it is warranted notwithstanding the narrow limits of my inquiry, is that people nowadays enjoy life in a greater variety of ways, get from it more kinds of *stimuli* and respond to its wider possibilities of satisfactions and pleasures with a greater range of zest, than did those of two generations ago. If all these many persons with whom I talked spoke truly about their reactions to life — and there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of any one of them — then, since they are all normal and representative individuals, the people of this present time are getting out of life more pleasures and a greater variety of them; and so are finding life more interesting and worth while, than did those of any other time within living memory.

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# Dakota Pioneers

## Reminiscences of one of them as told to

## Margaret Owen

I find myself in a dilemma. I must speak, yet I am pledged to silence. For long ago, when I was very young, I foreswore the most disturbing fault of age. I vowed that I would never fall a victim of the habit of the backward look. That I would never say, "those were the times." But lately I have felt the stirrings of that common need to live the past again. I want to talk, as old folks do, of pioneering days. To others I shall leave the stories of their hazards and their courage. I want to be the one to say that pioneers are gay. So I renounce my youthful promise.

Pioneers! There are so many kinds. There was Columbus. There were the Pilgrims. Remember stories of the Gold Rush. There have been brave explorers and daring adventurers, ardent warriors and sober husbandmen. Mostly they were grim and earnest. I do not long to share their fame. I yield my homage to their lofty purpose and their burning zeal. I would not minimize their hardships or their valor. I can not join that host; yet, in a modest way, I, too, have been a pioneer. Not in a gallant ship whose swelling sails rode out the storms, nor yet with slow and bravely creaking covered wagon. I went pioneering with a horse and buggy.

And at this moment it enchants me to remember that I wore a dress of rich maroon, with a basque of exquisite tightness and its ample skirt beguilingly extended by the last cry in hoops. On my head there was a matching hat, its high and narrow crown fixed to my protesting hair by two long and agonizing pins. I wore mitts on my hands so warmly clasped in the little round muff, and as protection from the cold a maroon coat enveloped me entirely. My cousin Tom was driving, and the name of the horse was Charlie.

Lest you think that I am jesting and that it is a Sunday afternoon's diversion I describe, let me say that from the farthest point where the railroad pierced the endless plain we drove straight into the lonely sunset. All this was in March of 1883, out in the Territory of Dakota. There, for nine rich years the prairies were my home, and all the memory of those days is edged with laughter. That is the kind of pioneering I remember and this is how it happened.

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For several years the westward trek had been under way. "Home seekers," emigrants from older States were called. One by one, two by two, in groups, they went to settle on Government land just opened in new Dakota. Stories of their fortunes drifted back and in our sheltered Wisconsin valley we heard of shrieking winds, of blinding blizzards. But we remembered, too, tales of magic acres and golden harvests. My eldest brother, David, had joined the march, and for two years we had devoured his letters. We knew of his homesteader's rights, of a tree claim he had filed and a preemption which he now proposed to take. In the early spring of 1883 he wrote to ask if I might join him for the summer, as he pressed still farther west and found another claim in the yet unopened country. I remember the moment of decision as though it were today. My gentle mother broke her thread, and hummed, and thought a little. Then, "Yes, dear, you may go." Those were the words that sent me pioneering. In less than a fortnight I was off.

THERE was plenty of opposition, of course. Doleful relatives who talked of treeless miles; of prairie fires; of wind. And shook their heads at my wilful daring. As a concession to feminine frailty, which was much protected in the 'eighties, it was arranged at the last moment that an elder cousin, Tom, should accompany me, to try his fortune in the West, too. So with a huge hamper of provisions between us, with admonitions and advice a-plenty, we set off on the "Homeseekers' Special." Red-eyed families waved goodbye, and in the passion of regret at parting I forgot the pain of my too-small shoes, a torture inevitably mingled with every great occasion in those foolish days.

TOM and I settled down for two days of cold meats and sandwiches, washed down with the scalding coffee which we bought at station lunchrooms. For, although several railroads were advertising "Palace Pullman Sleepers" and dining cars, the road which we took offered no such allurements. We read, and watched the wooded hills give way to flat bleak prairies. We shared our timid anticipations. Our destination was the town of Ipswich, in Edmond County, in the Territory of Dakota. A settlement of a dozen houses and a little store. There we were met by a kindly man who bore a letter of welcome from my brother. The letter bade us follow our desires. If we preferred to remain at the settlement until his return for more supplies for the shanty he was building on his new claim fifty miles west, David had arranged for us to stay with a family of friends. If we chose to venture onward, we found directions, supplies, a compass, and Charlie.

Fancy that alternative. Nobody can be a pioneer in a boarding house. So early the next morning, with provisions, blankets, and a lantern, we set out. There were no roads, although for a few miles we followed wagon tracks along the township line. I saw my first claim shanties, crude rough houses. Most of them were vacant, owned by settlers not yet returned from spending the winter in milder climes. From a

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window or two a woman's face looked out, feasting her eyes on the first passers-by after a long winter of isolation; enjoying, I faintly hoped, my maroon completeness. But in a little while that dubious tribute to my vanity was lost. We left all signs of habitation behind. Just Tom and I and Charlie, plodding steadily westward in a vast expanse of flat dark plain, exposed to more sky than I had ever seen before. A nice jogging pioneering, over rough and still frozen ground, with patches of snow covering the tall dead prairie grass that bent and broke under our wheels. The carcass of a buffalo or two gave silent evidence of the cruel cold just past, and in spite of the sun the day was bleak and raw. Before very long I wrapped myself more warmly in an ample shawl which was a part of every wardrobe in the 'eighties. Occasionally, a coyote would flash by us, and, happily at a distance, from time to time we saw the polecats of the prairie. We plodded on. A little homesick for hills and trees. A little awed by the silent vastness. But on.

Our only guide posts were the township and range numbers, marked on stones or iron posts at the section corners. All day we thought it was a lark to plot our course. Sometimes Tom would jump out when we reached a stone and while I held the reins — a needless safeguard, for Charlie was no capricious steed — we would figure out our course with the compass and our letter. Always we pressed west, and a little north, and as far as eye could see there was no other living person. Alone we gasped in wonder as the sun began to set — clear gold and red and purple painted in the West a sky of still-remembered radiance. Silent at the matchless beauty we drove ahead. And then the light began to fade and the sudden prairie gloom to fall. We were afraid.

Already it was far too dark to read the stones. And still no sign of human life. We rued the lazy miles that should have been more swiftly passed. A really desperate panic seized us. But over our distress, as over our delight, Charlie jogged along. At last a miracle of light gleamed far ahead. Some settler's shanty was just in sight. In terror that the beacon might be gone before we reached its haven, Tom urged poor old Charlie to a fleeter pace. Faster and faster, and with a flourish that might have passed for style instead of fear we drew up to the shanty door. There was no barrier of veranda or of steps. We stopped right at the entrance, and with his whip-end Tom knocked smartly on the door. A pleasant-faced young man responded, and when Tom asked him cautiously "if he knew a man named David Rogers," we were content to hear his hearty answer:

"I should say I do. He's the best man in this county. He'll be here any minute now, because he boards and sleeps over yonder while he's building farther west, and he always stops here on his way." And when he heard that I was the sister and Tom the cousin of the county's paragon he urged us to dismount and wait. Our brief touch with danger was ended, and in safe and sociable composure we waited for my brother.

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Soon we heard the clatter of a lumber wagon and in the prairie evening's stillness, David's voice rang out as he urged his Bird and Jim to speed. Proud of our courage and new competence, we rushed to meet him and were rewarded in his delight.

It was decided to leave Charlie and the buggy there, and go on in the wagon to David's lodging, where we could be put up for a few days until his new place was finished. When I had to climb to the high spring seat of that lumber wagon, I felt the first dissatisfaction with my costume. The red hoops caught and half way up I was held fast. To my agonized embarrassment it was our young host who saw my plight and gallantly released me. I did not know about the dress reformers then. But knickers and not hoops should have been my pioneering garment. Emancipations come too slowly.

Eight men, busy all day with saws and hammers, gathered from miles around to eat and sleep at this one completed shanty until their own places were finished. Eight men and sixteen eyes. That is what I remember. According to chivalric legends, all eight homesteaders should have been provoked to charm and sociability at the presence of a girl of twenty-one, and with no delay I should have been their toast. It did not work that way. We sat in aching silence. I had the only chair. The men sat on the floor. Some horrid duty of the stable kept my brother and my cousin in the yard. I waited with eight tongue-tied strangers in the shanty. My lashes were down in honest shyness, but if by chance I stole a glance around eight pairs of eyes were swiftly turned away. A cough, a scrape of boots. Those were the only sounds. In envy I could hear the talk between the settler's wife and her small daughter in the shanty lean-to kitchen. But only silence in our salon. In desperation for some refuge, I scanned the only book at hand. McGuffey's *Third Reader* it turned out to be. One page I read over and over again, as though it were the most absorbing tale, and to this day in moments of acute embarrassment I am tempted to recite the story which I memorized that night. It was about a fascinating cat which climbed a tree and sat upon a fence. My pioneering had its slight dangers and its delicate embarrassments.

My first supper on the plains was an old-fashioned boiled dinner with dried apple pie for dessert. While the dishes were cleared away, I wrote my letter home. At length I told of the beauty of the sunset, the reliability of Charlie, the comfort of the four-room shanty where we were stopping, and the joy of seeing David. I did not report the rising lump in my throat nor my confusion as the hour for bedtime came and I wondered where in that strange crowded place I should find a place to sleep.

That was very simply settled. The hostess came in and led me to the one room upstairs. There I was to occupy one of two rude cots. When we had vanished, the men downstairs made up their bunks on the floor. For three days we stayed at that house, in the daytime searching for a claim for Tom. But on the morning of the fourth day, my brother took me with him when he

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drove away. Tom stayed behind and I began my life as mistress of a prairie shanty.

As I finger memories' beads, I remember just how our shanty looked the day I first saw it. Its fresh, unpainted sides shone yellow in the glaring sun. There was no familiar solid chimney. A high stovepipe emerged a little rakishly through a hole sawed in the roof with nails driven in the edge of the board to hold it firmly distant and give us fire protection. Our shanty stood alone. No neighbor near and no road to its door. For miles around it was the only sign on the bleak prairie that the outpost of settlement had moved a little farther West.

The interior was comfortably, if somewhat meagrely, furnished. There was a home-made table with extra leaves in anticipation of the needs of hospitality. Two chairs, two beds, a chest, two kerosene lamps, a little linen. And dishes. That was all. Three tiers of rude shelves were built in two corners of the room, and by nightfall I had arranged our china there, and had exhausted the decorative possibilities of crockery.

I FOUND myself a homesteader as well as a housekeeper, for my brother had selected a claim adjoining his for me. Half of our shanty was built on it, and as a result of my residence in Dakota I was to be the owner of 160 acres of land. We were "squatters" then. That unpleasant word described those who had selected their claims and built on them before the land was officially opened by the Government. But shortly after we had settled down, the lands were opened to settlers and we drove thirty miles to the nearest Government land office to file preëmptions on our selections, and make our occupation secure.

WE WENT in our lumber wagon in order to bring back more supplies. Thirty miles in a lumber wagon is something to be remembered, even now. And on our return adventure was added to discomfort, for the day we filed a warm spring sun had melted all the snow left in the gullies. There were no bridges and we found streams to ford where there had been but frozen ground and hard packed snow before. Just in sight of home we crossed the swiftest current. I pulled my feet under me on the high spring seat and sat with all our groceries piled safely high around. David got out on the tongue of the wagon to urge the fearful horses on. The temporary stream was really deep and for a moment we were almost submerged. But our horses kept their footing and with dry feet, a pounding heart and a soaking brother, I reached the other side.

Now we began to see the new arrivals come and the period of our isolation was swiftly over. Some settlers came on foot. They carried spades and their only luggage on their backs. When they found pieces of land that pleased them, they would dig holes to signify selection and return the weary miles to file in proper fashion. For these pedestrians the brief season of melting snow made new difficulties. One day when I was idly using the field glasses which David left at the house with me, my lens discovered the figure of a newcomer trudging over the plains

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toward the gully. I watched him approach. He reached the edge, and pondered. Then swiftly coat and vest and shoes came off. Abruptly I put down my glasses. Girls were like that then. And dimly at a distance I could see him walk into the stream as far as he could keep his footing, his clothing in a bundle held high above his head. Then he hurled his garments to the other bank, swam a little, and clambered out to dress. For a week or two, that was the way most of the hikers crossed the little gulch, although the timorous who were resourceful discovered a broader, shallower crossing a little farther on.

BETTER favored settlers came in wagons, hired perhaps at the nearest railroad town. Often they brought a pile of lumber. And sometimes we would see a few boards dropped here, some there, and still others a little farther on. Then we would know that a group of friends had come to be together in their new adventure.

It was something we had failed to foresee, this never ending trail of passers-by. In rented buggies, in wagons and on foot, settlers would start out across the plains looking for the rich land they coveted. Nightfall would overtake them on the way, and to our shanty they would come from all directions. Our first guests came one night with darkness. There were five men, afraid of being lost on the trackless prairie if they ventured beyond our outpost. They begged shelter for the night. Kind-hearted David could not resist them in their plight, and we agreed to take them in. While they went out to the barn to care for their horses, I had to expand a supper planned for three to serve the appetites of eight, and for the first time as old settlers we welcomed newcomers to Dakota.

Our supply of china was scant. So while I cooked, Mary, the daughter of a family at the nearest settlement, cut out dishes from some old boxes. She scalloped their edges as a final touch, and our bread and cookies were thus ingratiatingly displayed. I have been hostess in more sophisticated times, but never has my pleasure in modish china, old silver or lovely crystal been greater than my joy in those scalloped cardboard plates. We kept our baked stuff in an old trunk. It had been painted inside and was fairly satisfactory. To seat our guests, however, we had to use it as a bench, and I remember that it caused some merriment when Mary said, as we cleared the meal away, "Please, sir, I'll have to disturb you; you're sitting on our pantry!"

AFTER Mary and I went to bed in our room, the men brought clean straw in, and using their own blankets made their beds on the floor. That was the simple prairie way to which I soon grew accustomed. With admirable consideration, every sign of straw had been cleared away when Mary and I were called in the morning, and while we prepared the breakfast the men looked after the horses again. Our grateful visitors offered to pay generously for their lodging, and although my brother refused, their suggestion put a notion in my head which flowered disastrously later.

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For about a month we were overrun with homeseekers. At times our shanty seemed discouragingly like a routine stop in the westward march. If they were lost, or, as so remarkably often seemed to happen, were friends of relatives or friends of ours, we did our best to make them comfortable, even though it sometimes meant back-breaking work and embarrassment for me, and for my brother, the loss of two or three precious days when he had to go to the railroad town to replenish the rapidly vanishing provisions.

But with all its difficulties I adored that building period. Little yellow shanties were springing up here and there all over the prairie, where only six weeks earlier we had been solitary. Early in the morning, before the prairie fog had lifted, I used to hear the beat, beat, beat of hammers through the stillness and the busy hum of saws. Homes were being built. Real neighbors were soon to come. Sometimes a mirage would bring the shanties close, and pile them one on top of the other. Then, standing in our doorway, we could see those little yellow shacks stretch to incredible proportions and watch them as in crazy majesty they tried to touch the sky.

Our own first building was over, and David deserted the hammer for the plow. The law required each settler to break ten acres, but ambitious men wanted to cultivate all they could in the first season. And from early dawn till sundown, David worked. First of all there was the fire-break, a wide strip of plowing some distance from our buildings. When that was finished, the acres were made ready to yield the longed for harvest.

We saved our small potatoes and the peelings and dropped them in the furrows near the house. By midsummer we had a fair crop of new potatoes, and although most of the newly broken acres were reserved for grain or feed, we did put in a garden near the shanty. And as soon as the first fever of cultivation was over, David turned again to building, and added another room with an outside door on my claim, and a shed to serve as kitchen for the summer. Now, with the added space, my homemaking instincts were aroused to make our combination living-dining room attractive.

First of all, I decided to paper the walls. Newspapers were the only covering I had and I determined to paper our four walls, and even the low sloping ceiling, with this unique decoration. Early one morning I began. With precision I matched the margins at the paper's edge to give the look of panels, and it was astonishingly nice. My scaffold at the highest point was a nail keg balanced on a chair, which in turn was balanced on a table. Once I dropped my shears and I had to climb down and back on that high perch before I could continue. It was more effort than I had ever dreamed. But when I surveyed my room I was content, and went to bed full of plans for further adornment the next day. The early morning sun brought wretched disappointment. My inexperienced and too energetic hand had spread the paste unevenly and here and there brown patches stained my walls. Perfection was my

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aim. So once more I mounted the keg upon the chair upon the table and again I matched with margin close to margin. This time the job was really final. Our room was lighter and more cozy. And later we discovered that two layers of newspaper were the best protection we could have to make us snug against the weather.

IN 1883, it was the custom for grocery stores to give brightly colored prints as premiums. They were sniffed at by the connoisseurs of art then, just as they are oddly valued now. To me, they were divine, and when a merchant friend from home sent on a choice selection, I saved them carefully. Now I tacked them here and there to brighten up my walls.

Ambition once aroused, I wanted curtains, pillows and upholstering material to beautify the shanty. Gunny sacking was the only fabric at hand. There was plenty of that, for feed, potatoes, flour, and other provisions were always sent in some kind of sack. So sacks it had to be. I ripped their seams and washed them. The flour sacks made dresser scarfs, table cloths and curtains, as well as innumerable tea towels. The stouter gunny sacking made pillows and upholstered a new chair and a couch. My nail keg was the basis of the chair. It was painted red, then the top was stuffed with straw, covered with the gunny sacking and a pleated skirt of the same material tacked around it. A long box upholstered just that way made a very beguiling sofa and pillows of the same material added to its comfort. They were stuffed with sweet grasses from the prairie, and in need of a last embellishment I thriftily unravelled an old red sock of my brother's and with the yarn embroidered a design that I considered very *chic*. Some nice rag rugs from home were on the floor, and together with two substantial chairs and the table David had made, our rooms were quite complete. My last bit of paint made the wood box bright. The fuel it held was simply tightly twisted hay, each faggot the size of a stick of wood and burning quite as brightly. There were a red cloth and a kerosene lamp on the table, and piles of old magazines and papers were ready for the rainy days or long evenings when work outside must be abandoned.

It was clumsy, I suppose, and heartbreakingly inadequate. But that living room is before me now and quite as satisfying as any scene of rich mahogany, with shaded lamps, silver and tapestry. Just gunny sacking, a ravelled sock, and the news of months ago.

WHILE I worked indoors, David was adding refinements outside, too. The water problem was serious. Melted snow provided it at first, and when the surface snow was gone water had to be hauled in a stone boat from the stream which the thaw sent racing down the gully. Now David dug the necessary well, and it served two purposes in addition to its essential function. First, it was a centre for sociability, as our less settled neighbors came to haul their water from it; and second, because it was for a time an open well, it also was a cellar. Our meat, our butter and our milk were low-

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ered by a rope nearly to the water's edge. For convenience, "for dainty salads," as the advertisers say, my electric refrigerator has advantages, but for cool and chilling air that open well was just as satisfactory.

Dakota water was cruelly hard. So the well was supplemented by two barrels buried at corners of the house, with troughs to bring to them every drop of rain our shanty shed. For bathing, and for finer laundering, we cherished this supply.

With our garden planted, our first seeding over, the well dug, and the house complete, June had come and my pride would not be satisfied until I had given a party and had displayed my triumph. So one Sunday indulgent David hitched up Charlie and we drove from one shanty to another to invite my guests to lunch. We knew our neighbors a little by that time. A retired doctor and his wife from Ohio, here; eager newlyweds from New York, there; some of gentle birth, some of simple circumstance. Whatever the difference in their fortunes, in Dakota they were all alike, sharing sober industry and buoyant in the radiant hopes the untouched land aroused.

I HAD my party. No paté, not a cocktail. Before the vogue for salads. But a party! The horses were needed for work, so to get some extra provisions I walked six miles and back two days before. Something in the prospect of a party made me don my best attire. The basque, the hoops, the wide-brimmed sailor hat — it was an idiotic costume in which to pick my way across the windy plains with a market basket on my arm. My hat would twist and the pins would pull in spite of a watchful hand on its brim. My skirt would billow and my ankles show. And even high leather shoes were not considered sufficient covering for decorum. Naïve distresses of 1883!

A season of parties began. And picnics. Singing was our great diversion. Great raw outdoor voices. Happy, hopeful voices. With more joy than harmony, more vigor than restraint, we would swing from one tune to another. When our lumber wagon brought the first organ to the neighborhood, there was much rejoicing and the next Sunday afternoon I manipulated stops and pedals with as much dexterity as possible while the swelling chorus rose behind me.

THE summer passed too swiftly. With late summer came the ripened grain, and David had to leave for his first homestead to harvest his crops there. He was to be gone about a month, and as Mary had returned to her family, it was arranged that two sisters holding claims not far away should come to spend the time with me. We looked forward to the reading, sewing and visiting we would do. And always there was the garden to care for and the cow to milk. Unexpected responsibilities developed, for David had been gone only a day or two when a man drove up and asked if he might board and room with us while he built a shanty on his claim about a mile away. We knew of him, and remembering the generous payment our chance guests had offered when we had so few comforts to give, we agreed to take him in. His horse was stabled in our barn; he occupied

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my brother's bed. No concierge ever gave a lodger such solicitous attention. Two meals at our table and a hearty lunch to carry with him. With the profit from his visit, we decided to entertain all the older women in the neighborhood at lunch.

OUR boarder had asked to be with us for a fortnight, and before it ended we had issued our invitations, and were impatient to be about our buying. We had serious consultations among ourselves to agree upon a proper charge. To our guest not a word about money had been said. The last breakfast was served, the final dinner-pail was packed. The moment of accounting was at hand. Our boarder went to the barn to hitch up. We waited at the shanty door for him to drive up and pay our modest charge. He never came to the door, but, with a friendly wave of the hand from the barn, he was off. His smile and pleasant gesture were our only payment.

Two weeks' labor and supplies were gone, the store of feed in the barn was much diminished. And a party coming. We were miserable with disappointment. But later, in hysterical amusement, our laughter at the joke helped us through a terrifying storm.

Dakota was always windy and sometimes really fearful wind-storms came. One blew up now, in my brother's absence. For three long days the shanty shook in the gale as though it might be rent asunder any moment. We started singing, trying to drown it out. The louder the wind blew, the more outrageously we sang. At last we turned to laughter. One of the girls perfected an imitation of our thrifty boarder and his careless wave of farewell, while our own crestfallen deportment was richly mimicked. It was sufficient to keep our noisy merriment pitched in competition with the wind.

But there was the problem of food and water. Neither songs nor laughter could take the place of either. And milk and cream, our butter and our meat, were all out in the well. We grew desperately resourceful. We tied the clothesline to the water pail and two of us ventured out together. We got the milk and the meat and the butter and filled the pail. Then Susan, in the house, began to wind the clothesline up, and clinging tightly to it we made our way against that fearful wind. But when we came to breathless safety, we found to our chagrin that the wind had whipped almost every drop of water out of the pail. Again we took our clothesline out, this time with a covered tea-kettle clutched between us. It was an admirable arrangement, and with water for our thirst we settled down until the morning of the third day. Then the shining sun and prairie quiet replaced the lowering clouds and lashing gale.

WHEN David came back, the tumble weeds were flying down from the north, racing ahead of the vigorous winds that came with the end of September. The tumble weeds were huge round balls that rolled swiftly over the plains to pile high against any obstruction, and turn leaping off again with every change in the current. Autumn had come. And with it the day of my

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leave-taking. I paid the Government $1.25 an acre, "proved up," as we said, and the claim was mine. Then, I donned once more my elegant maroon, and behind the kindly Charlie, David drove me back to the railroad town. Still there were no real roads, but tracks of wagons led us surely on along the section lines. No longer could we drive straight for our destination with only a compass to guide. Here and there all over the prairie friendly little shanties barred the way. Broken ground, a little grain, small gardens. A blossoming prairie waved farewell, as I went back to trees, and hills, and quiet valleys.

But early in the spring I came again, and five full months I taught the only school our township boasted. Like tumbling weeds themselves, the youngsters flew across the prairie in the mornings to the one-room schoolhouse over which I ruled. We had a Sunday school there, too, and on the occasional Sundays when a traveling preacher would come out from the settlement every homesteader from miles around would crowd into the tiny room. Life was secure in Dakota already. More acres had been broken this second year, the crops were bountiful, and the men were discussing ambitious plans for further planting in the early spring.

We added a cyclone cellar to the equipment of our shanty. Cyclones and prairie fires were the two black beasts of the plains. The unsheltered shanties were slight protection against the violent wind-storms. The plowed strips of ground around every building defended us from fire, and the cyclone refuge was an outside cellar with three straight smooth sides and steps cut in on one side, with a sod-covered gabled roof extending just above the ground. We used it for a refrigerator, too, as the well was more hygienically covered now.

When I left again there was eager gossip that the railroad would come farther west in the spring.

Once more I returned to teach the wind-blown children, and to marvel at the roads, the houses and the church that now sprang up. The railroad really came that summer, to be five miles instead of fifty miles away. We all drove to the settlement to see the first train come steaming in, its whistle blowing and its bell clanging, and the settlers cheering at the station platform. Almost overnight now little towns sprang up. Elevators to hoard the grain, banks to hold the money, stores to make the buying of provisions easy, a harness maker, perhaps a rude hotel, while on the claims were sturdier barns and larger houses. Fenced-in pastures were abundant, and we no longer saw the cows and horses picketed on the plains. We were farmers now, no longer pioneers. The richness of the plains was ours.

When I left as tumble weeds were piling high again, I was content that in the spring I should return once more, to begin my married life as a prairie wife. It was no shanty, but a sturdy house I decorated this time, and wedding finery made it very festive. Still there were the "sings," the picnics, the jolly work. The same high hope with which the furrows were so deeply planted. The devastating fear of drouth, the earnest

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prayer for rain. And when the marvel of the harvest came there was the same deep gratitude at its unrivaled richness.

But babies came and schools seemed all important. With real regret we left the much-loved country. Its wind, the glowering skies of winter, the impenetrable barrier of its snows. The rich promise of its future seemed scarcely to be touched when we went away. Our problems from that time on were city problems, and our ways the ways of city folk. The gay hard years out in Dakota were just a tender memory. Until last summer. Then we returned in eager expectation to see the fulfillment of the dreams we had.

On shining concrete roads, or fine hard-surfaced dirt, we slipped from town to town. No need to read the range marks any more. Just follow "No. 12," until you come to "20." No little shanties, no one-room schools. There was no isolation any more. Telephones, rural free delivery, and Fords. And yet defeat was in the air. Unpainted houses are far more sad than gallant yellow shanties ever could be, and broken fences more disturbing than the sight of iron pickets. The pioneers are gone. And with them youth has fled. Toil-worn, early-aging men and women take their places on the farms.

They are not cold as we were cold. They need not fear the dark or snow. But they have lost the precious thing we had. Faith in the soil. I do not envy them their stores, their homes, their schools or roads. They never sing any more.

To scientists, economists, and politicians, I leave discussion of the problem. For me there is this melancholy truth. In the brief span of my lifetime the cycle has been run. The prairies have grown old. And the most poignant sorrow of the times is that the plains have lost their gift of laughter.

So wistfully I break my vow, and say "those were the days."

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# Bush Camp

By Louis Kaye

*A Tale of Endurance in the Desert*

I HAVE just been trying to figure out when Cromer will get here. He planned to make it February 21, but that isn't much for me to go by now. I don't know the day of the week nor the date. But I know it's some time in February; maybe the tenth or eleventh day. That would make it ten or eleven days till Cromer shows up.

I've asked the Myall if we can hang out, but he looks at the grubsacks and the waterbags, and says nothing. Takura doesn't talk much at any time. He hasn't laughed in days. I thought it must be he's feeling badly from the spear wound in his leg, but the wound is healing and looks clean. Takura's way of treating that wound is to let his dog lick it. Most of these desert blacks have got dogs — a lean dingo breed of dog, with up-pointed ears like a wolf. They don't bark. Takura lent me his dog to lick a wound in my arm. That wound's healed pretty right now. It wasn't such a bad one. A spear, too. Blacks attacked us three days before we made this gully where we're camped.

We made the gully on foot, after six weeks' trekking from Tanami. Lost our camels the fifth week. Didn't have enough at the start, anyhow. But it won't matter a hoot if we can hang on till Cromer makes through. Then we'll head for Alice Springs. There's a new railroad south from there to Adelaide, and that thousand odd miles on steel will be a whole lot quicker than this camel trekking in the sand. Camels have transported me over quite a bit of bush and desert since I came to Australia five years ago as a mining engineer for the Makatta Mining Company. I was hardly more than a kid when I left the States; I feel old now.

IT WAS the fever that made me lose track of the date. I've had two bouts of it, and the days and nights played leap frog with each other so I didn't know which was which. It isn't malaria, but just desert fever. I've got it down now with drugs, but am still weak. Takura kept count of the days, numbering so many sun-ups, but he can't put the figure into English without arriving at something different each time.

I asked Takura several days back, whether we alone could make Alice Springs on foot. I think he thought I was crazy. He says no white could make through on foot. He couldn't

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carry enough water to last between waterholes. He himself might make through, but it wouldn't be any use because by the time he got camels and returned, the opportune moment for me to be decently buried would be past. Maybe he wouldn't get through anyhow; he's a northern nigger, and in this country of hostile tribesmen he can't trek very far away from a white man's rifle.

THE sun is just going down. Even a blind man, so long as he's not deaf, too, can tell when the night is coming hereabouts. He can hear it and feel it — the mosquitoes. They get busy at sundown. During the day it's desert flies, and they're worse than mosquitoes.

Takura's shadow falls across the tent flaps. He squats on his heels, nigger fashion, and sits still as a rock. His spears are beside him, and his dog lies in the sand. Takura slept from midday till I started in to write this about an hour ago. These Myall blacks won't sleep much when they're out of their own tribal territory. Takura won't sleep even in the day unless I'm standing guard. Tonight he won't sleep at all, but will be watching through the dark.

It's day again. I figure by the sun that it's along about eleven o'clock. During the night I didn't sleep well, because of a herd of sandfleas. So I was glad when the morning came. For a little while at dawn it was cool and fine. I went out of the tent in my pants and let the air play around the top of me. The little claypan we're camped by looked deep enough to swim in, but that is only because it is muddy and I couldn't see the bottom. There's only about a foot of water, and if I lay down in it my head would be on shore one side and my feet the other. It's full of leeches, anyway.

I cooked breakfast — at least, I boiled water. You get to know why Australian bushmen are such tea-drinkers. It's to disguise the taste and color of waterhole water. I took the taste out of my mouth with damper, and that tasted like sand. Damper's the bread of the bush — Klondike sourdoughs could digest it. Especially the kind I make.

But damper — and a little flour to make more — is all the grub that's left, except a can of asparagus. Once in so often I take up that asparagus and look reverently at the colored wrapper. A real artist designed that wrapper, and its action on the salivary glands is just about instantaneous. But I'm not going to open the can yet — I'm keeping it till there's no water to drink. I'll sure need it then. Now I only want it. There's a difference.

AFTER breakfast I tried to talk a bit with Takura, but you can't carry a conversation far when there are only grunts at the other end of it. Takura gets more and more silent. So I came into the tent and wrote a letter home. I'll mail it in Adelaide — if I ever get there.

Golly, but it's hot in this tent! There's no thermometer, but it's a safe bet it hasn't dropped below 110 in the shade during the last week. How high it's gone I daren't think. There's not much shade, anyway. There are no trees of any size around — just a clump or two of bulwaddy. Everywhere you look is just desert, and you can't look too long on ac-

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count of the sun glare. By tilting your hat down in front and looking modestly at your feet you can relieve the eye ache — if you keep your eyes shut. Nature didn't fashion a man against the kind of sun glare you get hereabouts, but it did the black. Takura's eyes are set so deep in his head the glare can't get at 'em. Yes, there'd be a lot of advantage in being Takura just now.

As a protection against the glare the tent also serves, for it breaks the sunrays. So I wasn't crazy when I toted it on after the camels were lost. Another thing it does is to hold the dust off when a dust-storm comes.

When I was putting down that period, I broke my pencil. There was a delay while I looked for my knife to sharpen it again. The knife ought to have been in my pocket, but was missing. So I had to hunt around the camp for it. While I'm doing this Takura looks at me without offering help in the search. He thinks I'm crazy, sitting down writing. Maybe I am. I don't know what I'm writing this for.

Yet writing is something to do, and it helps a bit. I don't expect anybody'll ever read it — not unless somebody finds it after the water's gone. Cromer might read it if he gets here too late. But I guess his brain wouldn't be strained any in puzzling out what had happened. He'd just have to look at me and at the empty waterbags. Empty waterbags tell that story often in this country.

Takura still squats outside the tent, with his spears and his dog. Soon it'll be time for chow — we'll repeat the process of the morning, and boil dirty water and eat dry damper. I haven't had a good feed in weeks, but I don't feel hungry. After we've had our midday grub, Takura will sleep a few hours, while I keep guard. While he's going to sleep, he'll keep opening his eyes to make sure I'm standing by with my rifle. He sure does distrust these desert blacks.

Takura was right. Last night there was a raid. Takura was up and watching for it, the way he always is when the darkness comes. He woke me without any speech. I nearly let out a yell because I thought I was being scalped, but had sense enough to keep quiet, and grab my rifle.

When I came out of the tent flaps Takura was waiting for me. I just heard him whisper, "Blacks come, boss. Plenty lot of them. Me been hear them."

So far as I could hear there wasn't a sound anywhere. I couldn't see anything moving. There was no moon, and the light of the stars was confusing. There's a lot of light from the stars, but it's a different light from that of the moon. You can see hills away off in the light of the stars, but try looking for anything closer. It's a fool light.

I waited and didn't see anything, or hear anything. But I didn't doubt Takura. If there were niggers around, he wouldn't have either to hear or see them to know. He could feel it. So could his dog. It was crouching silently there in the dark, its fangs bare.

After a bit I get tired of waiting for the niggers to make a move. I aim high and pump a couple of bullets into the dark, just to let them know we're awake and the camp prepared.

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It'll often put an attack off. I begin to think that's what has happened this time, because we wait for an hour or more, and there's no attack. I look at Takura, and ask him if he thinks they've gone.

"They think we sleep again," he said. "Might be they come soon."

He has his spears ready. We aren't standing up now, but are on our bellies. This always seemed an undignified fighting position to me, and so after a space I kneel. I can kneel without showing too much of myself, and I can shoot a lot better that way. But Takura still keeps flat down. Maybe he's got his head near the ground to listen, too.

AT LAST what I take to be a patch of brush, suddenly lets a spear fly. That nigger must have seen me because the spear comes so close it sighs disappointedly by my ear. I shoot and keep on shooting, even though I can now see nothing to hit. But the spears keep coming, so there are niggers there, somewhere.

Then I see one. He's right up close — his head lifts over a clump of brush. I can see his spear arm move. I pull the trigger — and there's a click, and that's all. I haven't recharged, and there's no time now.

I change my grip to the barrel, and make a leap. The first spear misses me. I make a swipe at the black, and the black misses the swipe, and I go over and bite the dust. Doggone! My eyes are blinded with dust, and my mouth full of grit. That nigger's on me pronto. I can feel his naked body, and my smarting eyes just make him out between me and the sky. They don't fight this way except when they've let off all their spears. He's got a *nulla*, and I can see it coming down at me. In another second Uncle Sam will lose a citizen. But the black just rolls over. Takura has speared him.

Yet the other blacks are still attacking. As I get to my feet I can see them. There's a lot of yelling now, for they've given up their silent fighting. The rifle's been quiet, and they figure they've got us licked. I cram cartridges into the magazine, and when they hear the shots again they draw off. They want cover from that lead. They crave it, and they keep it. I don't see any more of them. There aren't any more spears.

I join Takura again. There's no more sleep, but the blacks don't trouble us any now. When the morning comes we see their tracks and the spears they couldn't gather up, but that's all. They've left no wounded or dead.

Takura has another wound for his dog to lick. I surely was lucky, for I'm not hurt. I look at Takura and as he looks at me he laughs — the first real laugh in days. Those damned sandfleas had plagued me into stripping, and I hadn't the time to get my clothes on before the fight. I'm standing stark naked in the light of the rising sun. I blush and disappear into the tent.

THREE days have gone by, and things aren't panning out any too well around this camp. The claypan is sure a false hope. I've never seen water evaporate so quickly. There's only a couple of inches left. All the water bags we've got — five — are full, and we can't get that claypan water out of the sun. All we can do is try and screen it with green

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branches. We built it over with branches this morning, but there's not much scrub to cut. The sun's still getting through what we've got. I guess that waterhole's just fated to dry out on us. There's not only evaporation. This morning we found tracks of wallaby there. Been drinking in the night. Birds, too, are drinking that water.

Just looked over my ammunition. There are only seven cartridges left. Yesterday Takura said he saw smoke to the north — niggers' signal fires.

Takura is somber again and quiet. When I speak to him he only grunts or says nothing. He just sits and sits staring into the sun. And it's growing hotter. Breathing is hard; and almost everything is an effort. The only easy thing is to sweat. When I drink, the water just oozes out through my skin before I can hang up the waterbag again.

LAST night I baked the final issue of the flour into damper. With light rationing this damper will last two days. I'm still keeping my can of asparagus.

Takura has made a little fire outside the tent. He's cooking a snake he caught a little while ago. Takura's body shines in the sun like ebony. He doesn't wear anything but a breechclout that's a piece of a white man's old shirt.

There's a hot wind blowing in gusty puffs. It shakes the tent every little while. Outside I can see the smoke blown from the fire, and spirals of dust lift from the baked ground and whirl away. But there's not enough wind yet to raise a dust-storm.

Takura has finished cooking his snake. There's nothing small about Takura. He cuts off a sizable piece and brings it into the tent for me. He knows I don't eat snake, but he thinks now the stores are low I might be glad to.

"You like'm tucker, eh? Plenty better eat. White feller flour — him all been go. You eat?"

I shake my head. "You eat, Takura. Maybe when we finish the damper and there's nothing any more, I'll get quite an appetite for snake."

I LOOK at him for a little while, and remember how he has stood by me. This makes me feel grateful, and I would like to do something for him. When — or if — we get to Alice Springs, I'll try to repay him. But how? Money doesn't mean much to this Myall. I know he'd like my rifle, but the whites mightn't let him keep it. I think I might buy him some gewgaws in Alice Springs, but he's not a *lubra* to get a kick out of cheap ornaments. At last, still puzzling my head, I put it to him.

"Takura, you've been a good cobber on the trek. You've stood by me well. I'd have starved, or died of thirst before now, if you hadn't been with me to locate water. You've fought with me. When the blacks attacked the camp, you saved my life. I'd like to do something for you if we're lucky enough to get to Alice Springs. Just take time to mull it over, and then tell me what's the thing you'd like most in the world."

I can see by Takura's eyes that his brain is working hard. At last his gaze rests on the pants I'm wearing.

"You give'm me them pants, eh?"

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So I agree to give him the pants when we get to Alice Springs.

The sixth day since I began writing this. The claypan is still wet, but that's all you can say for it. With a pannikin I scooped all that was left into a waterbag, draining it through a cloth to take out the mud. Then I dug a bit of a hole in the bed of the claypan so that the hole might soak up a little. The damper I baked is gone long ago, and there's been nothing since except a small wallaby Takura speared. After a straight diet of damper, the change to a straight diet of meat played havoc with internal regions already devastated by bad water.

MY THIRST is fierce, but I put off drinking. I mustn't drink too much or too often. The fever hangs on a bit, and makes thirst worse. Otherwise maybe I could hold out all day without a drink, and take it only at night. You drink less at night. I've still got that can of asparagus, but I've cached it out of sight. No good being tempted.

Takura's managed to throw off his gloom once or twice, but most of the time his lips only move when they eat. He's about as sociable as a petrified tree with a grudge. I tried talking to his dog, but when I stroked it, it bit me. So just now I'm feeling sort of lonesome. All around there's just silence and desert as far as you can see. Even the nigger smoke signals have faded away.

There's just this white speck of a tent set down in the desert, and the little bit of life that's Takura, his dog, and me. And Takura and his dog are part of the wild, part of all this sand and desolation. I can't get close to either of 'em. There's nothing to do but just feel lonesome.

The seventh day. The big desert dingoes were howling round the tent last night. The claypan's dried up so there's no hope of getting any more water out of it. All the wallaby meat is gone. Game has quit coming to the claypan now it's dry.

But Takura isn't to be licked because the meat is gone. There are still snakes around, and there's one hanging in the bulwaddy thicket right now, an object of interest to flies. And Takura is making *nardoo*. This is a kind of aboriginal bread. I guess he figures if my palate is too delicate for snake, I'll eat that *nardoo*. I tasted it once before, and the best I can say for it is that it isn't snake.

AFTERNOON of the same day: the dust storm has come. The sky's turned brown. Everywhere you look there's whirling dust. The old tent is quaking. One of the waterbags gets shaken from the ridge pole, and the stopper pops out and half the water's drained into the sand before I can get to the bag. I take the others down in case they fall, too.

Sand is piling up on the windward side of the tent like a snowdrift. It's nothing in this country for sheepmen or cattlemen to build a wire fence, and go out to admire it a week later and find nothing of it left. Sand just swamped it.

Takura squats on his heels, his back to the driving dust. He doesn't say anything, but has quit pounding his *nardoo*. It's a safe bet that bread will be half sand.

Suddenly I notice a little rent in the windward wall of the tent. I make a jump for it to stop it going

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any farther. While I hold it, I call for Takura to hustle in and get the camp needle and twine out of the pack. The tent's so old, a patch is needed because the two sides of the rent won't hold the twine when pulled together in the wind. There's nothing to use for a patch. The tear's getting bigger. The wind gets stronger and I can't let go, so I tell Takura to get my knife and cut a piece out of the leg of my pants.

He looks at me in a pained sort of way, remembering those pants are to be his, and he doesn't want a piece cut out of them. Suddenly he grabs the knife, but instead of taking a piece out of the leg cuts it out of the seat, while I have my hands full hanging onto the tent. Maybe he thinks he won't see the piece missing from the back when he's wearing the pants. No white will ever understand the Myall mind.

The dust thins out a bit, but the storm will last through the day. The dust has found its way into the tent, and a thick coat of it covers the damp waterbags. On the windward side of the tent lies a high drift of sand, bulging the wall in. There's nothing to shovel it away with, so we just let it pile there.

THE eighth day. I've found out what's wrong with Takura. It isn't that he's troubled because he's scared we are going to die here. He's nursing a hate, and that hate is for Cromer. I should have remembered that the first time I mentioned Cromer's name, he looked at me in a funny way, and seemed curious about Cromer. I recall now what he asked.

He said: "What this feller Cromer like? Him got eyes color like'm sky? Him feller not young, not old — might be like white feller Walden?" (Walden is a miner up at Tanami, and about forty.) "Might be him drag foot a little bit, eh, boss?"

Cromer is lame from an old wound. I told Takura he had the man right.

Then Takura told me his story. It isn't a pretty one, but not uncommon. You can guess it — a young *lubra*, Takura, and a white man who wanted the *lubra*. Takura fought with spears, but spears aren't much good against a rifle except from ambush, and an old man of the tribe sold the *lubra* to Cromer, anyway.

ONE day Takura found her again, but she was sick and dying. When she was dead, he took up his spears and went to the Tanami diggings. He said nothing. He could have gone to the missions with his story, or to the troopers, but he didn't. He would stay with the white men and learn their ways. Then he would kill Cromer after his own Myall fashion.

Now, all I know about Cromer is what you know about a white you've met up with a couple of times. What you get to know about a white man that way is sometimes not what the blacks get to know. I don't doubt Takura's story, and I hate to think that the chap I'm depending on to rescue me from this dried up oasis in the desert is this man Cromer. But Cromer means camels and water, and camels and water mean life. What am I going to do about it when Cromer comes — or if he comes?

It's the tenth day. There's about a pannikin of water left. I know what thirst is now, and what self-denial is

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as I sit here looking at that last waterbag and — drinking from it. Cromer doesn't come. Takura goes to a rise not far from the tent and watches, but he doesn't see anybody. Night is coming.

The eleventh day. The water's gone and this morning I busted open my can of asparagus and shared it with Takura. He wouldn't take his half — only ate a little for the moisture that was in it. He looks at me mighty often. He can see I'm weak.

I WENT off to the rise to look for camels. It's not far, but I made mighty heavy going of it. I didn't know a man could stumble so much without falling down. There doesn't seem any strength in my legs, and they act queerly, like I'm drunk. There's a drunk kind of feeling in my head, too, but not a happy one.

I make the rise and look over the desert. Nothing but sand to the end of the world — sand dotted with clumps of spinifex and turkey brush and sparse stunted mallee. Just the frowsy scrub of the desert, all dusty and parched in the sun. The sand burns, and the heat dances in front of my eyes. But nothing save that heat moves. The nigger smoke fires we used to see to the north are gone. There's just a desolation. Takura is right — we could never have made it on foot, and it's a sure bet we can't now.

A long time I wait watching the desert, but nothing shows and the sun gets lower in the sky. It must be around three in the afternoon. The glare hurts my eyes, and starts my head off aching again. I didn't think so much pain could get inside a man's skull. I think it'll send me crazy if I don't get back in the tent out of the sun.

So I start back. But it seems a long way, and I'm giddy and weak and feel sick. Suddenly my legs give out under me — I don't stumble and fall, my legs just buckle and let me down. I try to rise, and fall flat again. I get up on my elbow, and wait a bit, and make another try. But my legs are crazy. It's just like the bones in them have turned to rubber. I find myself laughing hysterically. How the hell can a man walk on rubber legs?

It's no good. I can't make back to the camp. I lie in the burning sun, and I feel weaker and weaker. I try to call out to Takura, but he's already coming. He stoops over me. His black arms are strong — I marvel how strong they are, since he has hungered and thirsted even as I have. He picks me up and carries me to the tent and I lie still till the pain goes out of my head.

AFTER a bit, I feel better. I don't sit up, but can write this by lying on my side. God knows why I write it, and my fingers are so awkward now with a pencil I guess it would take some deciphering. But who's going to find it, anyway? Only Cromer if I go before he gets here. And I don't get any pleasure out of the notion of Cromer reading it. The more I think about Takura's story the less I like that man.

The thirst gets worse, and there's nothing to drink now. I expect I'll go crazy in the end and start in to dig for water in the sand.

And as I lie here, I wonder what's going to occur if Cromer *does* happen along. Will Takura start some-

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thing out of that hate of his? I guess that'll spoil my chance of being taken in with the camels. I'm too weak to handle the camels on that trek myself. And if Takura spears Cromer because of his hate, will he handle the camels himself for me? But maybe he would be too scared to go near the settlement after killing Cromer. He wouldn't want to meet with whites.

He sits outside the tent with his spears. He says nothing. I don't know what's hidden in his heart. Maybe he's fighting a battle between his friendliness for me, and his hate of Cromer. I don't know. But I understand that hate. I'd like —

* * *

Dan Hedberg and Joe Williams came on that abandoned camp one day on the pad to Tanami. There were the faded pages with their pencil scrawl trailing off to that abrupt ending. Williams turned to Hedberg, who had an old-timer's knowledge of the *mulga* and spinifex.

"He couldn't have died, Dan. The camp was abandoned all right."

"He didn't die," Dan nodded. "He made his trek to Alice Springs. Cromer brought the camels and the water."

"And Takura?"

"He waited," said Dan Hedberg, filling his pipe. "He waited till the camels made the settlement. He followed the string all the way in, because he didn't want Cromer to see him. Takura was compelled to get his drink by sneaking on the camp at night, when there was no waterhole handy. His white boss was unconscious most of the time, sick from starvation and fever. He couldn't have known much about that trek. I reckon Takura could have speared Cromer easily enough, but he wanted to see his sick boss safe in the settlement. So he waited till they made Alice Springs. He waited till he got the white boss's pants — and them pants ain't been seen since.

"Cromer was comin' out of Moloney's late at night, and Takura drove three spears into him, fast and hard."

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# Science and the Span of Life

By T. Swann Harding

*Have our chances of living to advanced years become greater?*

Not long ago some polite person in that suave monthly sometimes miscalled *The American Mockery* informed us that we are becoming "A Nation of Elders in the Making." The information must have been delayed. Dr. Ira S. Wile announced this in *Mental Hygiene* for July, 1928, and he provided a table for those unable to see the result when standing on a text dead level. With some minor alterations by a friendly cabinet maker the table comes out somewhat as follows:

| Age | Per cent of population in | |
|---|---|---|
| | 1870 | 1920 |
| Under 10 years | 26.8 | 21.7 |
| 10 to 19 " | 22.9 | 19.0 |
| 20 to 29 " | 17.7 | 17.4 |
| 30 to 39 " | 12.6 | 15.0 |
| 40 to 49 " | 9.1 | 11.5 |
| 50 to 59 " | 5.8 | 7.9 |
| 60 and over | 5.0 | 7.5 |

It is quite apparent that we are becoming racially, if not individually, addicted to senility. The same ratio holds in Great Britain, according to Sir George Newman, chief medical officer of the Ministry of Health, who says that "various methods of calculation suggest that by 1941 some 7.5 per cent of the population will be children, while more than 19 per cent will be persons of over fifty-five. Instead of, as at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, children outnumbering those in late middle and old age, the latter will be much more than twice as numerous as the former by the middle of the century." Hence as we approach forty, we may begin to feel older, but we can at least shout, "Well, by gad, there's a lot more of us than there used to be!" — may it yield us great consolation!

Approaching forty, furthermore, we approach an increased possibility of death from eight causes — tuberculosis, heart diseases, cancer, diabetes, cerebral hemorrhage and apoplexy, pneumonia, nephritis and accidents. While mortality has been lowered in earlier years death, in spite of the reputed advances of modern medicine, is taking an increasing toll among adults in the prime of life and after middle age. Year by year their life expectation decreases and men are also getting the worst of things, for their chances of reaching old age in the United

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States today are less than woman's at every age above 35. For instance, in the age group from 35 to 44, the death rate for males showed an increase in 1927 of 12.5 per cent over 1921, but for women there was actually a decrease of 4 per cent. I herewith come out more strongly than ever for women's rights — for men.

WE SHOULD miss Dr. Eugene Lyman Fisk. Every so often, Dr. Logan Clendenning to the contrary notwithstanding, the press quotes him as the man who "Foresees Big Extension of Life Period of Man," and he usually declares that periodic medical examinations would result in reducing the death rate among the middle aged more than fifty per cent, while reductions of eighteen to twenty-four per cent are common to all ages — all this as a result of finding out quickly enough that you have fallen arches or ingrowing toe nails. Nothing at all seems to stand in the way of reckoning old age to begin at 500 or 600, except a few odds and ends like infection, motor accidents, gangsters and mysterious homicides. Indeed, man seems almost to reach the brink of immortality in successive waves of Dr. Fisk's hopeful enthusiasm.

But all professional rejuvenators tend to forget that man has had to sacrifice certain things, among them relative immortality, to become the complex organism that he is. He has become very highly differentiated; division of labor is rigid in the human body and, except in cancer, his cells show extreme reluctance to return to the hearty days of youth. While Raymond Pearl has estimated that he might live a thousand years at a very low temperature, he prefers to live at ordinary temperatures and have a shorter though merrier life. The hold of his thyroid upon his metabolism is such that if it slows him down a few per cent in his rate of living he complains to the doctors; if 30 or 40 per cent he becomes a cretin or sub-moron. If he deprives himself of food, he starves to death, and he painfully lacks the ability to rejuvenate himself by a process of spontaneous internal reorganization.

THERE is no doubt that life cycles may be lengthened statistically and that since Lincoln's time average longevity is greater in the entire civilized world. But the emphasis is usually so placed that the individual fancies he himself may learn to live to some phenomenal age, and not only does scientific knowledge vouchsafe us nothing very promising here, but the past is unanimous in the assurance that the span of human life has seldom indeed exceeded 105 years.

According to A. C. Eyeleshymer in the May, 1928, *Scientific Monthly*, very recent investigations as to human bone growth seem to indicate that it might be possible for us, with extreme care, to stretch this span to 125 years. Raymond Pearl sets the extreme limits of existence among lower invertebrates at 100 hours, insects 17 years, fish 267 years, amphibia 36 years, reptiles 175 years, birds 118 years, and mammals 100 years.

This does not alter the fact that dozens of writers on longevity have uncritically accepted all sorts of phenomenal tales of long lives. Most

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notorious of all is the case of Thomas Parr, who appeared in our school histories and was apparently celebrated for nothing else whatever save his age. Yet W. J. Thoms's *Human Longevity: Its Facts and Fictions* (1873) rather explodes Parr. Parr was undoubtedly an extremely old man, probably 100. He was supposed to have been born in 1483 and to have died in 1635. But this record rests exclusively upon his own assertion and upon the lucubrations of John Taylor, who published a doggerel history of Parr in 1635 but furnished no figures or proofs. Thoms could find no corroborative information despite long search. The entry of the date of death stood aloofly alone, and the age record rested exclusively upon Parr's own unsupported personal assertion and the credulity of other men, as lusty then as now. Harvey, discoverer of the circulation of the blood, performed an autopsy on Parr but says nothing of his exact age, save that friends who accompanied him to London said he was 152. He describes the vigorous condition of Parr's viscera as unusual in an "aged individual" and makes a detailed report which has its æsthetic deficiencies.

THEN there is Henry Jenkins, said to have been born 1501 and to have died 1670. The earliest account of him is that of Miss Ann Savile, composed about 1662, and upon her unsupported statement rests authority for Jenkins's 169 years. (*Philosophical Transactions Royal Society*, XIX: 221, 1696.) How did she know? Jenkins told her! She took up her residence in Bolton, Yorkshire, and was then informed that a male resident of the parish had attained the age of 159. Jenkins later came to Miss Savile's sister to beg, and Miss Ann then implored him to swear before God how old he was. (Remember that we have not yet outgrown this obsolete method of securing "scientific" testimony.) He swore. He paused and he calculated. He probably swore some more. Then he finally decided he must be 162 or 163 anyhow, and upon this unsupported assertion of a senile old billygoat after a handout rests the fabric of his egregious term of life. Jenkins could neither read nor write; the parish register does not record his age at death, and he thus vanishes into the pale limbo of pretension. Many other such records completely disintegrate under Thoms's rigorous analysis.

BUT let us become more recent and consider the "131 year old" liar mentioned by Raymond Pearl in his *Biology of Death*, where he is pictured tottering in a doorway surrounded by his wife and his "putative" child. I. L. Nascher, M.D., in 1920 investigated this case of Uncle John Shell, Greasy Creek, Leslie County, Ky., reported in the press to be 131 years of age. Shell had been married in 1917 and was the reputed father of a six year old son. Nascher found him ignorant, illiterate, in a state of garrulous dementia, prey to delusions and hallucinations, and strongly susceptible to suggestion. His statements were absolutely unreliable, yet upon them stood his age record. The United States Census of 1900 reported him as born 1822. He himself said: "Maybe I am 200 years

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old; I don't know." His youngest child was actually fifty-two and his eldest seventy-five. He was obviously about one hundred and, fortunately, he could give no system by which one might attain that age. He had no rules or fixed habits. Until a few years before he had been a heavy meat eater. His vegetable consumption was limited to corn, cabbage, onions, sweet potatoes, white potatoes and beans; he drank sweet milk or buttermilk, little coffee or tea, and had a single dram of liquor a day.

As to his paternity at 125 — let that pass. In fact Raymond Pearl, in a personal letter, suggests that most such instances wither in the light of investigation into the semblance of female fickleness. Yet *The New York Times* of November 7, 1928, reports at London the birth of a daughter to the Rev. Dr. Robert Horton, "noted Congregational leader," and his thirty-six year old wife; and the doctor is seventy-three. The same paper on November 10, 1928, reported that Dr. Lyon G. Tyler, President Emeritus of the College of William and Mary and son of John Tyler, tenth President of the United States, became the father of a son at the advanced age of seventy-six, after producing a daughter three years earlier. Certainly Dr. Harvey W. Wiley was a father at sixty-seven, and *Science* in early 1929 apparently authenticates a father of seventy-one and a mother of fifty-one.

In spite of the uniform results of scientific investigations in such cases, encyclopædias still record for us Petraz Gzarten, of Kapros, Hungary, who died in 1724 at the reputed age of 185, the record being authenticated by the word of his ninety-five year old son! Or we are told of Joseph Surrington, a Norwegian peasant, who died at 160 and left children aged 9 to 103! Or of Drakenburg, a Danish peasant, married at 111, who lived to be 146, according to the "records." Or of Gurgen Douglas, said to have married at eighty-five and to have left eight children, and Peter Albrecht married at the same age and leaving seven. But this is local folklore and it is significant that such advanced ages nearly always occur among illiterate peasants.

The article on "Longevity" in Rees's *Cyclopedia*, published in 1819, tells us that longevity decreased by God's providence as the number of the people on earth increased. It includes a perfectly extraordinary table, listing such ages as 150 for Francis Confist, of Yorkshire; 175 for Louisa Truxo, a South American Negress; 150 each for Albuna Marc and Titus Fullonius. But it is significantly admitted that such records have usually come from country villages (where they are less likely to be accurate) rather than from large cities. Oddly enough, the article makes this thoroughly up to date remark: "We may further add, that longevity is, in a great measure, hereditary." That is the opinion of leading investigators today, and they all assure us that we must select our parents for longevity records in order to achieve any ourselves.

In America such reports of long lives come almost invariably from Indians, Negroes, and white illiterates. Every census shows a greater

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number of persons alive at ages 80, 85, 90, 95 and 100 than at any more uneven age below and in between these figures. This is mathematically impossible, and indicates carelessness or falsification in giving ages. Critical investigation of any advanced age usually discloses grave error. Thus Noah Raby was reported to have died in a New Jersey almshouse in 1904 at 132; but no birth record could be produced; Raby said he had enlisted in the Navy in 1809, but the records said 1839! He entered the almshouse in 1870, giving his age as 59, so was probably 93 or 94.

A CENSUS of 1910 showed 3,300 centenarians in largely illiterate Rumania out of a population of 8,000,000, while Bulgaria with one-half Rumania's population claimed the same number of centenarians. Is this the "scientific evidence" which led Metchnikoff to affirm that sour milk produced Bulgarian longevity? In October, 1929, Dr. Louis I. Dublin told the American Health Association that the breakdown of the human body occurs well on the near side of the century mark, except in isolated instances. The span of life for the great majority of persons is from eighty to one hundred years, although life expectancy has increased — which simply means that more persons can now reasonably hope to become aged than in former years. Yet in our population of 120,000,000 only a few more than 70,000 have attained the age of 80, or 0.6 per cent. Though about 5,000 people in the country claim to have attained an age of 100 years, Dublin holds that most of them are mistaken — often honestly so — about the matter. While it is true that an average of 20 years has been added to the average length of human life (not to the life span, which has always remained at 80 to 100), we have decreased infant mortality and the reduction of preventable deaths from typhoid, diptheria, scarlet fever, smallpox and such diseases, to thank for this.

AGE records are easy to falsify, or they may err for several reasons. In the first place birth and baptismal certificates are hard to secure, especially among the poor, who make most of the "records." Family Bibles are increasingly uncommon, and other documentary evidence is difficult to find and often untrustworthy when found. The evidence of other long-lived people is inadmissible, because it presumes that their own age equals or surpasses that of the person about whom they give testimony. Even a death certificate is not conclusive, as it may be in error, and when it comes to tombstones Dr. Johnson was right: "In lapidary inscriptions a man is not under oath;" moreover, both intentional jests and the abrasions of time may modify the words or figures.

Then how can you identify the centenarian with the evidence when you have it? The name may be a common one. It may have been changed by marriage or by legal deed, or the individual may have inherited the exact name of a beloved child born earlier and dying earlier than the centenarian's own birth. As to the statements of the aged themselves, who are more prone to falsify, even in good faith, than the senile — in order to obtain sympathy, admira-

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tion, special aid or mere solicitude — while many of us at some period of life date our ages ahead a few years for specific purposes and have to live the lie to the tomb for fear of detection? It is also the nature of both primitive and ignorant people, and of copyists, to err, both by intent and in innocence, while numerals and letter shapes change, tradition fills the lapses of memory, mythical accretions are always prevalent, the significance of words mutates and time corrupts.

THE effect of nutrition upon growth and longevity is, however, a large and an interesting question. Thus rats fed a deficient diet may be held a long time at a set weight, while their brothers and sisters grow to maturity and die. The development of flat worms may actually be reversed by deficient food until they succeed in growing smaller than they were when they were hatched; they may then be fed and matured once more. It is well known that the bees create an insect extraordinarily different from the common run by the use of royal jelly, while all their other females, lacking this special nutriment, become sterile workers. Furthermore, it has repeatedly been shown that a very young tadpole can be made to metamorphose very rapidly into a very small frog by feeding it thyroid; on the other hand if thyroid substance and iodine are altogether removed from the diet of the tadpoles, they simply grow to be large tadpoles and lose all power to metamorphose into frogs. The growth and development of the Mexican axolotl may similarly be controled by thyroid.

Many such instances might be mentioned. A growth-promoting substance has been extracted from young mice and termed embryonic extract; it will cause tissue to grow in glass, whereas extracts from adult mice will not do this. Finally, if we get low enough down in the biological scale, we come to the slipper animalcule (*paramecium*) which has been kept for 5,000 of its generations without death or conjugation; it suffered periods of depression when it could not divide and produce by fission as usual, but overcame these attacks of senility by internal reorganization, a reduction, a disappearance of certain structures and a sort of spontaneous rejuvenation! That is longevity for you.

NOW the flat worm (*planaria*) we mentioned will, in starvation, decrease in size from a length of 25 mm. to one of 6 mm. and will display all the symptoms of genuine rejuvenation — cell differentiation is lost and the metabolism of the young worm regained. It is actually young. It has exactly the same aptitudes, capacities and capabilities of a newly hatched worm, and all this though it is chronologically senile to the extent of having lived twenty of its own normal generations. Feed it adequately again and it grows to an adult like other young worms. Moreover this process of reduction and growth can be repeated a score of times.

Certain laboratory investigators have also shown that the life of rats can be prolonged for an added period of one-sixth their natural span by the addition of rich supplements to already adequate diets. Just what

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message this holds for human beings remains to be determined, but results on rats are often humanly applicable. Certainly this finding offers a more promising possibility of increasing man's life span than most empiric suggestions that have been made to date.

WE MAY as individuals be somewhat consoled by the fact that eight prominent men whose ages averaged 87 were lively and active in August, 1929. They were: William Watts Folwell, 96; George Haven Putnam, 85; Oliver Wendell Holmes, 88; Robert Dollar, 85; Thomas A. Edison, 82; Elihu Root, 84; George F. Baker, 89; John D. Rockefeller, 90. This does not alter the fact that the expectation of life at 50, which is 21 years, had not materially altered in the past 100 years. It is true that environmental changes might accomplish much, for the human life span is fixed only in the sense that it is in some way adjusted to present environmental conditions; but it must be remembered that such changes would have to be violent in order to have drastic effects. An average extension of ten years in the life span is, however, not only possible but probable. On the other hand, the statistical studies of a life extension institute which starts out with carefully selected subjects in the first place — for insurance policyholders must pass medical examinations — must always be taken with a grain of salt. Reductions in mortality rates due to periodic medical examinations must be regarded in the light of the facts that most of the ailments discovered are trivial and that very many serious pathological conditions begin insidiously, produce no symptoms, and escape detection in medical examinations. Thus I might cite a physician friend of mine in Baltimore who had his regular medical examination and was passed as fit only one month before severe abdominal pains sent him to the operating table with what turned out to be an intestinal cancer, which proved inoperable and killed him in six months. I might indeed, cite the case of Haley Fiske, for I read in *The Baltimore Evening Sun*, March 4, 1929, the following words on his sudden death while out driving:

> Haley Fiske, president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, by the very nature of his calling was a specialist on death. As head of the Life Extension Institute he was no less a proponent of the art of living. . . . He had no premonition of death, no cause for worry.

DIET, sanitation, preventive medicine and an effort to make adequate medical attention generally available to all who need it would do much to make old age more comfortable, and may actually increase the human life span in time. But, finally, we also know that our bones become more brittle, our arteries thicken and harden, our blood supply to the brain decreases, the amount of our blood diminishes, our nerves lose their sensibility, our alimentary tract is weakened, our white and red blood cells diminish in number, our protoplasm loses its metabolic power, we begin to feel like the devil anyway, to miss most of what goes on, and may as well be dead once senility gets a real start on us. Why lie and hypothecate fancies? Why not face reality and launch into senility with all the dignity we can muster?

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# Education for Discontent

By Poppy Cannon

*Denmark's famous folk schools furnish food for thought on the educational problem in America*

There was once a zealot in an ancient land who worshipped two gods. Day after day, month after month, he prostrated himself before them, offering up prayers, first to one then to the other. But after a time his tongue and his senses became confused by this double worship; so that one day he attributed to the first god the immemorial prerogatives of the second, and performed before the second the rites intended for the first. Incensed by these insults, both gods rose up and smote the worshipper to the earth, so that his mouth was filled with dust.

Like this zealot, Americans have for a long time been worshipping two idols — Success and Education. Now we are beginning to confuse our idols. The success element in education is being stressed more and more. Education has come to be regarded as a means of attaining not understanding but financial reward — an executive position, a large income, membership in a newer and noisier country club.

Recently I asked an earnest young friend why he had decided to go to college. His answer came without a moment's hesitation. "If I get an A.B. degree from college the chances are that I will earn about $120,000 during my lifetime; if I go to work now with just a high school diploma I'd be apt to earn only $88,000; if I had gone to work after grammar school I'd get only $64,000." Statistics like these are circulated among high school seniors all over the country. This type of argument has become a part of the go-getter speech at commencement. As sales talk, it is remarkably effective. I am not at all convinced that this particular boy was either mentally or temperamentally adapted to college, and I happen to know that he was not able to go without imposing a great financial burden upon his family as well as himself. Nevertheless he, along with thousands of others like him, was "sold on" college.

So many are being graduated from our colleges that we will soon find that the presence of these hordes of young men and women, all blessed with inordinate ambition and A.B.'s, can not help but depress the earning power of all of them. The expectation of financial reward for education will

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act as a boomerang. The mouths of these young people will be filled with the dust of frustration and the conviction of failure. Yet the fault will not belong entirely to them, but rather to their educators who, by training them for success, have also educated them for unhappiness, and fostered in them during the impressionable years at college a taste for ease and luxury which they may find it hard to gratify later on.

Even in these palmy days of education, it often takes years before a graduate can live in surroundings as luxurious as his fraternity house. A professional man in his thirties told me that it is only within the last year that he could afford living quarters that could compare with those which a wealthy alumnus provided for his fraternity in a small, freshwater college. "There I had a room with a wood-burning fireplace, a private bath, soft rugs, pictures, books with rich bindings! I was surrounded by beauty! After graduation I came to New York. Well, imagine hunting for room, board and beauty for a hundred dollars a month. I've been miserable for years. And yet, as a boy I was poor, but I didn't know any better. It wasn't my own widowed mother, but my foster-mother, my college, which taught me to crave luxuries which I couldn't have."

Perhaps our prosperity programme merits and requires all the sacrifices made for its sake. On the other hand it is possible that peace of mind can exist along with efficiency. We might turn our eyes toward the North, toward the tidy land of Denmark, where they have found that it is better to educate people to be happy on their own twenty acres, than to goad them to hysterical activity for a fabulous salary of $20,000.

The folk high schools of Denmark are not a modern innovation, nor are they the product of any scientific doctrine of education or carefully devised pedagogical system. Like Topsy, they "just growed" out of the life of the common people, whom they are intended to serve. The idea was conceived in the mind of Bishop Grundtvig, who was a great Danish leader in the latter part of the Eighteenth and early part of the Nineteenth Century. He shared with Rousseau and with Ruskin a romantic belief in the original nobility of mankind and a fervid faith in the political and spiritual capabilities of the common people.

As a passionate patriot, he was profoundly stirred by the disaster which overtook Denmark after a seven-year war with Germany, when, shorn of Schleswig-Holstein and separated from Norway, the people settled down into a melancholy torpor from which it seemed impossible to rouse them. While still a young man, Grundtvig had achieved some fame as a poet and historian, learned in the heroic mythology of the North. But his audience was small and cultured; he decided to dedicate his art to the whole of his people, and so he translated Saxo's *Chronicles of Denmark* from Latin into the rough and rugged Danish of the peasants. In this way he hoped to make this fine historical work available to everybody. From all this labor he gained nothing; nothing, that is, except the convic-

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tion that not literature but a living voice speaking the mother tongue could awaken a people to an appreciation of their own country and their place in the world. In this way he hit upon the idea of a school for adults.

His ideas and his projects were carried out by his disciple, Christian Kold — a spry, salty-worded, little man, if we may judge from the number of anecdotes which are related about him. Even Grundtvig could not understand how Kold could build a school for six hundred dollars, but Kold intended that life at his school should be like that of the cottagers who came there. On a scanty acreage which he bought at Ryslinge about 1850, he built the cheapest possible frame house, consisting of a schoolroom, a living room and a kitchen. The house had a thatched roof and no more than six windows, three of them in the schoolroom, Kold and his assistant slept in the attic along with their pupils, about twenty-five young men. One day someone entered the schoolroom without removing his dirty, wooden shoes. Kold told him to take off his shoes.

"Is the floor too good to walk on with wooden shoes?" asked the offender.

"No," answered Kold, "but my sister's work is."

It was Kold's own sister who scrubbed the floors, kept house and cooked the meals. The board was very plain — the whole household used only two pounds of sugar during the entire winter. In the fruit soup (which is served in Scandinavia as a dessert at the end of the meal even if it is called a soup) there was only one raisin for each person. Breakfast consisted of a single dish, *ollebrod*, a concoction of beer, water and black bread. Not a single cup of coffee or tea was served all winter long. Moreover there were no off-campus tea rooms where one might escape the "horrible college food." There were no football games, no fraternities, no curriculum, majors and minors, no graduation, no diplomas, no personnel office to get jobs for graduates, no student councils, no advisers, no orientation committees — none of the things, in fact, which make up an education in our day — only a group of eager young farmers and a funny, wiry, little man who talked, strained and tugged at life together, trying to wrest from it some meaning. Even at night when they lay in the attic under the rustling thatch, the discussion went on, under Kold's guidance, until sleep finally overcame them.

It made no difference if there were no lights in the attic, for Kold would not permit his students to take notes, believing that the pupil, acting as reporter isolated himself from the spiritual fellowship of the group. There were not then and never have been any examinations in the folk high schools. When a young man said to Kold that he was afraid that he might not remember what he said if he did not have to write it down, Kold replied: "When we lay down drain pipes, we mark the place so that we can find them again, but when we sow the golden corn in the earth, we do not set pegs above it; we let the rains fall, and the sun shine upon the soil, and when the time comes, the corn will be there ready for us."

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Kold did not attempt to make his students into more efficient farmers, nor to give them any specific information; he wanted to take these people in his charge and "wind them up," to enliven rather than to enlighten them. He felt that the acquisition of specialized knowledge was of secondary importance and that a young man, given the tools of learning and an awakened consciousness, could be entrusted with his own subsequent education.

In the folk high school at Frederiksborg which I visited last summer Kold's simple and rugged ideals still persist. The school itself is an old and rambling house, set back from a road which winds through a grove of beech trees. The old-fashioned gardens surrounding the house are full of gigantic flowers in pastel colors, which suit the domestic "butterieness" of the neat and rolling landscape. During the three summer months, the school belongs to the girls; the men have their five months term during mid-winter when the farms do not require their presence.

We visited the classes — a lecture on Danish history, a geography class, a class in Danish literature, an English class and a physical education class. In the old days the instruction was entirely by the "living word." Now that books are so plentiful and cheap, some of the students had texts, all neatly wrapped in brown paper, but the teacher made no reference to the books. He simply talked and the students listened, or else the students talked and he listened with the same respectful attention which they accorded him. Each class began and ended with a song. On this particular day they sang one song over and over again — in our honor. The song was *My Old Kentucky Home* in a Danish translation which had been made by Holger Begtrup, the head of the school. In the English class the song regained some kinship with the words as we knew them. After all it is little wonder that these people, raised on folk tunes, should choose this song, which is our nearest approach to a genuine folk melody. Then, too, it deals with things that they know and care about — birds, growing things, well-beloved cottages, joy in a simple, everyday world.

For these girls are daughters of farmers and tradesmen in small communities. Some of their fathers are landowners to whom the expenditure of eighty kroner or about twenty dollars a month for board, room and tuition at the folk school, is not a burden. About a third of the students are at school on State scholarships which pay half their expenses. Most of the girls will go back to the farms, some will leave home to become domestics, a very few may go on to Askov for three years to become folk school teachers themselves. Certainly they are not the type who would be apt to go to the Latin school to prepare for a University or professional career — just common people who have been in the primary schools from six to fourteen and then gone into their own communities, helped in the house and on the farm, learned how things are in real life, learned to work hard and to love their homes. Later on at about eighteen or twenty or even older, at that strange, panicky

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time of life when one is almost but not quite committed to the responsibilities of adult existence, when one is thinking of leaving home or of getting married, perhaps, and is worried and troubled in spirit — that is the time to go to the adult folk school, to take those difficult problems to wise and understanding people in a place which does not seem large nor terrifyingly different from home even when one first enters into the pleasant dusk of the front hall with its faintly acrid smell of old rafters.

At lectures and at meal times all are together; even the headmaster's baby has his high chair in the dining room with the students and the rest of the faculty. For lunch we had bowls of fresh buttermilk soup flavored with lemon; hash, which translated literally from the Danish means put-it-in-a-pan; tiny potatoes, browned and glazed in brown sugar; shredded lettuce with a dressing of sour cream — the same sort of meal which one gets in a Danish farmhouse. As dessert, there is mail from home which has been brought in and placed at the headmaster's place. He has developed a marvelous precision in flipping letters all over the room.

"Froken Anna Johansen. Here you are, Anna." The letter whizzes across the room and lands at her elbow.

"Froken Gudrun Ratvig. It's a letter from Jutland." He crooks his arm carefully and flips, but it is a difficult angle. The letter dives into a glass of milk. Half a dozen pairs of arms make a dash to the rescue. The dripping message from Jutland is saved.

After the distribution of the mail he gives them a comprehensive and understandable summary of the news of the day, of what is going on in the Parliament in Copenhagen, in Russia, in America. Sometimes they ask questions, remarkably pertinent and well-informed questions for the most part.

Their intelligent interest reminded me by contrast of a Vassar senior who visited us during Thanksgiving vacation a couple of years ago. We happened to be discussing the great Civil War between the Northern and Southern armies of China which was occupying the front page columns of the newspapers at that time. Our visitor knew nothing about the Chinese Civil War; she had only a vague recollection of hearing "something about a riot in China." Yet she was majoring in history and was "swamped with work," writing a paper on the causes of the French Revolution.

One is impressed more and more by the great importance attached to the teacher as a warm, human personality. It is the folk school idea that teachers must be people. Whether they are university men and women or have done doctoral researches into the dialects of the ancient Geats, is a matter much less important. Moreover the folk school teacher is not permitted to inundate in charts of pedagogical efficiency, in quartiles and percentiles. He has no six weeks' grades to issue, no school board reports to fill out. The Danish State grants support to these privately owned and operated schools, yet it maintains no supervision over their programmes and methods. The

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Government sees to it that the finances of the school are in order, hands out the necessary subsidies and scholarships, and withdraws, allowing a free teacher to follow his own inspiration.

The folk school teacher has time for the intangibles in education; he has the leisure and the freedom necessary for the formulation of a philosophy of life, a synthesis of experience which he can proffer to his pupils as a "working hypothesis" for their own lives. Probably he can not answer all their eager questions, possibly they will not accept his tentative replies, but he can, at any rate, give them a sense of the importance of their questions; he can encourage them to go on asking them as long as they live. In other words, he tries to give them in a few, rich months, the essence of a liberal education, the kind of education of which he says, "No one, by the longest stretch of the imagination, could expect to earn a single extra krone or add another acre to his farm."

Yet the astounding part of the story is this — that the folk schools saved the economic life of Denmark. At a time when conditions in the world market required that Denmark change from an agricultural country, exporting wheat, to a dairying country, specializing in the export of butter and bacon, her enlightened rural population saw that the change was absolutely essential. As if by a wave of a fairy godmother's wand, the countryside was transformed into a huge dairy, and a coöperative dairy at that. It was a difficult adjustment, which required a high degree of adaptability and intelligence. This was not a miracle of efficiency but a miracle of culture. A sullen suspicious peasantry had first to be changed into a forward-looking, socially-minded citizenry by the impractical folk schools which had never taught farming or dairying or even the coöperative idea, but had bred a group of young Liberals who saw the necessity for adaptation and coöperation and could convince their communities of it.

The ability to coöperate successfully is an eloquent commentary on the intelligence of the Danish rural population, especially when one considers attempted coöperatives in our own country. California, it is true, has worked out a system, and because of this a farm population of half a million in California produces more wealth than a farm population of a million and a half in North Carolina. Most of our attempts at cooperative marketing have failed through lack of trust. One man is skeptical, another is selfish, a third is mean — and the project fails. So we have a general dissatisfaction with rural life, a needlessly impoverished farming community, and a steady drift away from the farm.

The folk high school idea has certain universal principles. And if it is true that our farm youth is being educated away from the farm, and if he as well as his urban brother is being educated away from reality rather than toward it, then, obviously there is room in our school system for the kind of education which will enable him to differentiate between satisfaction and clamor, excitement and pleasure, high salary and a full life.

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# In a Little Spanish City

By Ruth Q. McBride

*A sketch of domestic life in Malaga*

It seems to me that Spain, at least in so far as its cities are concerned, is becoming thoroughly modern at a rate so alarmingly rapid that this story must be told right away, otherwise its picturesque characters will have entirely disappeared.

We came to Malaga just a few years ago. Only a street or two was paved and the others contained six inches of mud when it rained or, which was more often, a liberal topping of fine, flour-like dust, when it was dry. On those days when the hot *terral* blew down from the plateaus to the north, and stirred up this dust, it was as bad as a London fog so far as visibility was concerned, and nothing could have been more trying to eyes, nose and throat, unless it were a real sand storm on the Sahara.

But now the streets are well paved, they are always clean, the vagabond dogs have disappeared, and one sees fewer children and grown-ups of the poorer classes with badly infected eyes and blindness. Indeed, there are plenty of northern cities of less clean aspect than Malaga today — even certain parts of New York.

When a house or an apartment is vacant in Spain they don't put up a "For Rent" sign, but simply fasten a sheet of paper about a foot square across the iron railing of the balconies looking upon the street. The great majority of city-bred Spaniards live in apartments, as do the French and other Continentals, there being relatively few "detached homes." These few are known as "villas," generally surrounded by walls and high iron fences, with attractive and massive wrought iron gates as entrances.

Villas are usually occupied by the more prosperous families. There are no lawns, but many oddly shaped beds of bright flowers, abloom all the year, the entrance ways and paths, which would be of cement or grass in America, are invariably covered in this part of the country with clean white stones about the size of small peas. A little vegetable garden at the rear is something rarely seen — the important *señores* who live in villas take interest in the flowers but couldn't descend to truck gardening!

When we came to Malaga, our first job was house hunting. So we hired a one-horse cab by the hour —

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at that time the city was still quite taxiless — and told the *cochero* to drive us slowly up and down all the streets in the desirable parts of town. All we had to do was to look for the white papers on the balconies. But the housing problem at that time was quite as acute here as in most other countries in those post-war years, and we found only four papers in our search. Two were fourth floor apartments — the walk-up kind, there being few elevators in this part of the world. They had small, dark and smelly rooms, and no baths. They were in a crooked street so narrow that our cab filled it from curb to curb, with side-walks only two feet wide, and pedestrians pressed against the buildings as we drove by. The top of our cab was turned back but those two papers were nevertheless so high up that we shouldn't have seen them at all had not our cheerful and patient driver pointed with his whip. He took keen interest in the search and would stop from time to time — between cigarettes — to ask acquaintances if they knew of places for rent.

AT LAST we found a little house enclosed in its small garden, pink white-washed walls and red tile roof, with the alluring words "Villa Lydia" on blue tiles let into the brick walls on either side of the big iron gate.

We signed the contract; our furniture had arrived, and in America we could have moved in the next day. But not so in Spain!

First there was the painter to interview. He came every day for a week with his pails of tinted white-wash, and a youthful helper, to do all the walls, stencil a little border around the top in each room, and to paint a black stripe along each wall where it meets the floor. This takes the place of wooden base-boards and, as it is of oil paint, permits the washing up of the floors without disfiguring the whitewashed walls.

The floors themselves are, of course, of tiny mosaic tiles in various patterns in blues, browns, brick-reds and white — pretty, cool and easily cleaned.

THEN we went to a hardware store to buy a bath tub, wash bowl and other bathroom fixtures, which here are "furniture" and hence often moved from house to house with one's other belongings. The plumber took four days to install these conveniences in a small room set off for the purpose. He, also, always arrived with his boy assistant who carried the tools and seemed to do most of the hard work as well.

That bathroom cost well over a hundred and fifty dollars and at that the first bath, looked forward to with such expectation, was a dismal failure. The plumber had apparently figured that water would run up hill! Another day went by in rearranging certain pipes at different angles.

During the rest of the second week the electrician slowly but surely finished wiring for the electric lights, running the wires, as is the custom, around the walls and across the ceilings in plain but not ornamental sight. Then when you give up the house, you rip all the wires down and take them with you! And the gas man, too, had drilled holes through the three-foot stone-and-plaster wall

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of the basement, dug up most of the garden, and finally pronounced that the gas stove was now ready to *funcionar*.

The next day we moved and settled, and straightaway tackled the servant problem. In this we were most fortunate. We were directed to a convent where girls are taught all branches of the *servicio doméstico*. A Sister in black robes came to interview us and to introduce the two girls. But first we must agree that they should be allowed to attend early Mass every Sunday and on the many religious holidays, which was quite all right with us. The deal being concluded, my husband made a *faux pas;* he put out his hand, his expression signifying a hearty hand-shake with the Sister. Nothing doing! She smiled sweetly and explained she could shake hands with me but not with a man! Husband was crushed!

Down by the bull-ring, about half a mile away, is a little hole in the wall where shoes are repaired. They also sell ice. It comes in *barras*, three feet long, eight inches deep and six inches wide. You send the boy for half a bar every day. He takes a small piece of rope, loops it around the ice, and starts homeward with his load. On a hot August day, it is remarkable how long a small Andalusian boy can take to walk a mile and still not actually loiter. Of course, he must greet his friends along the way, ask after their families and discuss the last bullfight, but that is not loitering — only the politeness which necessity demands. In the meantime the Southern sun, at a hundred in the shade, has been caressing the half-bar! Eventually the boy arrives. The ice is a dripping wet mass about the size of a small base-ball bat, and half as long. There are only three electric refrigerators in the city, and we have ordered the next one.

There is a button on the brick wall outside the iron-grilled gate. The system is that trades folk press the button, thus ringing a bell in the kitchen; the cook then springs forth and the transaction over eggs, chickens and vegetables is speedily and quietly consummated. That's the system theoretically, but it doesn't quite work out in practice.

In the first place, the vegetable woman who arrives on a donkey — and the Andalusian donkey possesses longer ears than any other in the whole world — puts her finger on the button. The bell in the kitchen is a full-throated and joyous instrument. The cook likes its cheerful peal. She is in no hurry. This is Andalusia. Neither is the vegetable woman pressed for time. She leaves her finger resting playfully on the button. The third day we packed the kitchen bell in wool, stuffed it with paper and converted it into a mild-mannered buzzer.

The vegetable woman, Francisca is her name — Paca for short — rides astride. Upon the donkey's back is placed first a thick padded blanket. Then on each side is strapped a large wicker pannier the width of a bushel basket but quite a little deeper. The baskets are filled with fine red tomatoes, two cents a pound; good looking cabbages, seven cents apiece, except for those biggest ones, nine cents; lettuce, one and a

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half to two cents a head; carrots, cauliflower, potatoes, onions, garlic and fine long stalks of what looks like celery, but isn't. During the season, too, there are thin limp-looking stalks of green asparagus no thicker than a pencil — local grown, and not to be compared with the delicious article from Aranjuez, so popular in Madrid's gay restaurants. Paca perches herself between the baskets, well toward the donkey's stern, her feet sticking out in front. Cook at last appears, and Paca slides gracefully forward and down to earth, and a long, loud, animated conversation ensues — so animated at times that one looks through the iron-barred windows to make sure that no war has broken out and hostilities commenced.

THE postman arrives; always a welcome visitor. Blue uniform with red trimmings — quite smart. Carmen, the sewing girl, goes to the gate for the mail and must give the carrier a tip of ten centimes for each letter delivered and five centimes for each postcard. Apparently the postage stamp pays the conveyance of the message only as far as the post office and not to the street address inscribed thereon. I never heard of anyone even discussing the possibility of mail being received if this tip were withheld.

More about Carmen. She is a pretty, black-haired, black-eyed orphan with beautiful white even teeth of which she is very proud. Always smiling and cheerful, except on rare occasions when she displays the most violent — almost hysterical — temper possible to imagine. Five minutes after the tempest has passed, however, she is happy and serene as ever.

She does all the sewing and ironing, makes beautiful lace, embroidery; makes all her own dresses and those of the cook and housemaid, which by the way are furnished by the mistress — at least all except the street dresses for Sunday wear. Carmen presses all the clothes, master's included, and superintends the whole household. She packs things away, even jewelry, and knows where every article in the entire house is kept. When anything is lost or misplaced, we call Carmen and she produces it as if by magic. She is well paid for a Malaga girl — seven dollars a month. Cook gets eight!

THE maid came in one day to say that a gypsy was at the door and insisted upon seeing the *señora*. He wouldn't go away, so finally I went out to see what was the matter.

He was a picture. An old man, tall and slender, gray hair, finely chiseled features, aquiline nose, but badly lame in one leg. He wore corduroy trousers quite small around the bottom, a wide bright-red sash in place of a belt, white collarless shirt and a short jacket. He carried a long staff in his hand.

My caller in one graceful motion swept from his head a tall wide-brimmed Cordovan hat, covered his heart therewith and bowed to the knee. He issued a command in a low voice and immediately at his feet a little white poodle puppy sat up, paws in the air.

With infinite grace and persuasion he then explained that he had heard that we were now settled. He hoped we were comfortable, that all was

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going as we wished, that we were well served and attended, and that God would grant us many, many years of happiness and health. But he had noticed one great fault in our establishment which a kind fate had sent him to correct. Our young son had no dog. This little poodle, born and reared in the gypsy's own family, was to supply that need. A thoroughbred, the most clever dog in Spain; in fact never had such a perfect specimen been offered for sale!

WE WANTED a dog, it is true, but we certainly had not decided that our dog was to be a poodle. The gypsy said that ownership could be transferred for the insignificant sum of one hundred pesetas. We were not interested. In that case he would accept seventy-five pesetas. No, we didn't want a poodle. With tears in his eyes and calling upon the Deity to witness his utter devastation, the gypsy placed a little collar and lead upon the puppy. He handed me the other end of the lead and said:

"Señora, for no one else in the world would I do such a thing, but this dog is yours — for fifty pesetas."

The conversation was growing too lengthy so, to get rid of the gypsy gentleman, I said: "Under no circumstances would I pay more than ten pesetas. Good day!" and I turned toward the door.

My caller laughed good naturedly and called after me:

"All right, señora, give me the money!"

So we had a dog after all at a cost of $1.50. And we named him "Gypsy." Every month the former owner would come to the house to trim his white curly coat, using huge scissors bigger than the puppy in size.

The grocery man is very modern. He delivers his sales at your door. The conveyance is a covered two-wheeled cart of miniature proportions. A small boy drives a smaller donkey. On the sides of the cart are painted proudly the words "Casa Bilbao — Ultramarinos." The grocery man also much prefers you to run up a long bill with him than for you to pay cash. If you are very insistent, he will send the bill every month, but apparently he would much rather let it run half a year. When you pay the bill, he sends a little present, a box of chocolates or a small Dutch cheese. And at Christmas he always presents with his compliments a bottle of champagne.

THE egg and chicken man is funny. His donkey has the two wicker hampers strapped on each side. Over the top is stretched a cover made of wicker-work, like a net with large openings. Through these openings protrude the heads of live roosters and hens destined for the boiling pot. They cackle and chatter away as they jog sedately along toward the guillotine. Antonio sits upon the donkey's back between his live wares, as he peddles them from customer to customer. He stops to tell us the latest news of his son, of whom he is so proud. This boy is only seventeen and has been the first in his class in the Malaga school for three years. Now Antonio has sent him to Madrid to study to become a doctor, and is saving every penny for that purpose. This is an unusually ambitious thing for an Andalusian peasant to attempt.

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Just before Christmas, hundreds of live turkeys are also brought to market, but they have no such comfortable conveyance as the chickens. No, indeed. They walk — all the way from the farm into the city. They are driven in droves like sheep. A farmer or two with long staffs walk with them. Often there are also a boy and dog in the procession. They enter the town and proceed slowly to the plaza through the principal crowded streets, in and out among the pedestrians and carts; sales being effected upon the way. Antonio gives me a pretty good chicken for a dollar, but the turkey man is more difficult. By dint of diligent bargaining he parts with a ten pound turkey for five dollars.

In Spain, Christmas comes on January 6 — the day of the Three Kings. Andalusian houses have no big chimneys nor fire-places so there is no place to hang up stockings — nor for Santa Claus to get in if they were hung. Christmas trees are also unknown in the ordinary Spanish household. But one thing all the houses have in common — iron balconies overlooking the street. So all the little folks put their shoes out on the balcony on the night of January 5, *Vispera de Reyes*. While the little tots are sound asleep, the good Three Kings — Gaspar, Melchior and Baltazar — arrive and fill the shoes with lovely presents. The Kings generally take a look at the sleeping children and Baltazar, who is black, kisses their cheeks. When the sleepers awaken, even before rushing to the balcony to see what presents they have, they look in the glass to see if there is a black smudge on their cheeks (carefully placed there by fond parents in the night) — the kiss of Baltazar.

The meat man has an ingenious method of delivering his wares. Instead of wicker hampers tied to the sides of his donkey, he has rigged up two rough cabinets, each with three shelves. A rough door, crudely painted, opens, displaying various choice cuts of lamb, beef and pork. On the bottom shelf are always bones — an article much in demand for the almost daily *cocido* — a boiled dish of chick peas, bits of meat, fat pork, potatoes and cabbage, and colored by a few pieces of red sausage and the ever present yellow saffron. Properly made, it is a most satisfying *entrée*.

A few weeks ago there was a catastrophe. The meat man's donkey collided with a street car and was badly injured. The wooden containers were broken to bits; chops, bones and all were scattered wide upon the street, and since then we have had to send to the butcher shop for meat! In a way it is sad to think that probably his next conveyance will be a neat little motor truck.

The bread and cake man used to come on a donkey; but as I've already said, modernity is rapidly coming into its own. Now he pedals a tricycle with a delivery box attached thereto. He calls, "Niña, niña, niña!" to the cook in a loud falsetto voice and is the only one of all the tradesfolk who seems really to be in a hurry.

Whenever I go into the kitchen to make a cake, a pie, or some other American dish, the cook is quite disgusted. She looks on with a very pained expression. The kitchen is no

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place for a señora to be. She watches the operation once or twice, and then one day the same dish appears on the table — one of cook's little surprises. Now she even makes waffles! Her name is Angeles — and it is most appropriate.

Some of these "foreign dishes" she regards as quite outlandish. She can't understand at all the idea of apple sauce with roast pork, and she won't even taste cranberry sauce. One evening in winter I went into her domain and popped some corn we had brought from America. I smiled sweetly and treated her with the greatest consideration because I felt that this strange procedure would just about be the last straw for poor cook. Imagine my surprise when she said:

"Let me do it."

"But you never saw anything like this," I replied; "and anyway I have only one small package and you can't get any more in all Spain. This is a very special dish that comes only from America."

"Oh, señora," she cried, "what a mistake! Why, we have corn just like that in my village and I often made it when I was a little girl!"

Anyway, I was skeptical and finished the corn myself. Cook saw I didn't believe her and was offended. Three months later her brother came to town from her tiny village of Ferrairola, way up in the Sierra Nevada range, a whole day's trip on a donkey from the nearest point on the main road. Cook came smiling into the *sala*. She put a huge red handkerchief on the floor, carefully untied the knot, opened up the bundle, and there were several pounds of perfectly good pop corn in little red ears! I'll believe her next time. Pop corn is not known at all in Malaga, and how it ever got to that little inaccessible mountain village is a mystery. Perhaps some returning immigrant years ago brought some seeds and started the fashion.

Our first gardener was big and fat and had a continual grouch, as well as a most evil temper. He lasted only two weeks and we had a hard time to find another one, as gentlemen of this profession seem to be scarce. At last we found good old Campos. He must be sixty, tall, well-built, gray hair and gray bristles on a chin that is shaved every Sunday — face lined with wrinkles a quarter of an inch deep. There was one thing, however, about which we discovered he was always careless. He invariably wound his faded red *faja* so loosely around his middle that the old patched corduroy trousers were dangerously upon the point of being lost. Always ready and cheerful, Campos is one of that tribe of loyal and faithful servants so difficult to find nowadays.

But Campos had never done any gardening. He had driven mules and worked on the docks, but he said he simply loved flowers. We set him to work with slight misgivings. First he dug. Beds took form all over the garden — squares, triangles and stars. We bought six rose bushes, and Campos said that was enough. Every morning he would bring new cuttings, vines and creepers, seeds and little plants. Goodness knows where he got them and we didn't ask. He made quite a point of the fact, however, that it was sheer waste to spend good money for such things. And in six months our garden was a mass of

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flowers. To be sure, some of Campos's color schemes were rather wild and gay, but this was corrected by a little judicious transplanting.

EVERY Saturday morning, when our boy was a little fellow, Campos would bring his donkey. He would put Sonny on its back, hop on behind, and off they would start for a long ride in the hills, Campos making the hours all too short with tales of the mountains and of the fisher folk. Never was the boy more carefully attended. Later, there came a horse and a proper riding master, but Campos is proud that it was he who first taught the boy to ride.

There is a well defined code as to what a señor and a señora may and may not do. Neither, for instance, may carry a parcel of any kind, however small, upon the street. You may not even carry it from the store to the car waiting at the curb; a small boy is sent along to relieve you of the burden. It follows that for a señora even to think of doing any marketing is strictly taboo. That is exclusively reserved for cook to do; but notwithstanding her quite apparent displeasure, I can't resist from time to time. The market occupies a whole block. Its main entrance is an old Moorish archway and inside are rows of tempting stalls — fish, meat, fowl, and vegetables.

One day I made a great discovery. Grape fruit — the one thing that was lacking. There were only three, at the back of the stall, almost out of sight. One was small, but the other two were the largest I'd ever seen. "But you can't eat them, señora," replied the man to my inquiry, "those are for the pigs."

He was quite mystified when I bought them. The small one was good, but the two giants upon examination proved to have an inch-thick skin and to be quite dry. The next day I returned to ask more about this "strange fruit" so unknown in these parts that even the fruit man had no name for them. It appears there are only two trees — one of the big kind and one of the smaller. The man thought I was crazy when I contracted on the spot for the whole output of the latter.

As we return from the market, a strong smell of second-rate olive oil greets our nostrils; where *buñuelos*, the Spanish version of a doughnut, are being fried in the street, for sale to the passing public. They are unsweetened, and are cooked in a large pan of boiling olive oil over a charcoal fire. The woman pours the mixture into a cone of wrapping paper, snips off the end, and deftly squirts the contents into the oil, each *buñuelo* taking the shape of a figure eight. They are eaten by Spaniards at all hours of the day, and are very often taken with their early morning coffee.

IT IS fitting that the star act of my train of tradesfolk should have been reserved till the last. The Malaga fishman — a veritable *pièce de résistance*, as it were — a thing infinitely picturesque and quite unique. In many parts of Spain the women are the fish vendors. In the north, for instance, this barefooted tribe swing through the streets with wide flat fish baskets neatly balanced upon their heads. But in Malaga the peddling of fish is distinctly a man's job — but, alas, he too is gradually disappearing.

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He buys his wares direct from the fishermen, who haul in their nets along the Malaga waterfront. He arranges his purchases in two flat baskets about two feet in diameter. Each basket has a long rope handle. The ropes are then arranged around forearm and elbow so that the baskets hang almost to the ground. Hands against the waist line and arms akimbo to keep the baskets from knocking against the legs, he moves swiftly along at a jog trot, so his cry that he is selling live fish may be more or less justified.

"*Boquerones vivos!* Live soles! Ink fish fresh as the sunrise!" he sings.

His stock is amazing. Three distinct sizes of sardines, little devilfish (a great local delicacy is to boil them in their own ink), red mullet, tiny whitebait, and other sorts galore.

He wears a wide-brimmed hat with a high crown, a white shirt, a wide blue sash, and blue trousers rolled up to the calf. He is barefooted.

He sets the two baskets on the ground, sprinkles water over his wares, and starts a long and intricate process of bargaining with the cook. Gypsy innocently strolls by, steals a fish, and darts away. Gyp and the fisherman are not friends; and the cause is not far to seek.

# Moth Dust

By Frances Taylor Patterson

I smell syringa, sweet-lipped in the dark,
Syringa waxen-white and honey-gold;
A pale bride leaning on the breast of night.
These are the things of youth. And I am old.

A dusty miller, careless of his touch,
Brushes my hand where once your fingers clung,
Like torches lighting fires in my blood,
And dropped inert again. When I was young.

The pale syringa leans upon the night.
The broken moon leans back upon the sky.
And I am tired leaning on the years
Which will not loose their hold and let me die.

I see syringa, white-faced in the dark.
Moth-dust upon my hand, dew damp and cold.
The stars are pale as tapers on a tomb.
These are the things of age. And I am old.

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# Embattled Farmers

By Raymond T. Fuller

*Causes and problems that lie behind nature's reconquest of Eastern agricultural lands*

That Washington crossed the Delaware in 1776 and captured a Hessian camp at Trenton is an incident fully dwelt on by school histories. That whole battalions of American destiny crossed the Mississippi during the 1860's, these histories have somehow failed to impress upon the rural East at all. Many pages are devoted to debates on slavery and State Rights and to the Civil War; but, as every Ph.D. in history knows, the civil war between man and the soil had many fascinating chapters begun at that period.

It could be said that the decline of farming in the Northeastern States started in 1865. A mere trickle in the dyke; but a trickle now grown to a flood. Department of Agriculture records divulge that in 1865 more cleared land existed east of the Mississippi than in any year since. Clearing and pioneering between Ohio and the sunrise, begun centuries before, reached its high tide that year. Since then, the green soldiery of nature has slowly but relentlessly been beating back the plowshare, the brush-hook and the mattock.

Considering the fact that since 1860 our population has doubled, it must be obvious that "out where the West begins" is where the country's farming future lies. Official surveys and statistics galore show that Out West is where the country's farming is really done — at a profit. Eastern agricultural areas are decreasing. The West's are increasing. The 1860 style Northeastern farmer (like his local store-keeper) is a moribund institution, in fact as well as on paper, and as an institution he does not know it. Certainly he must suspect it!

Years of contact with the individuals on the farms in question have enabled me to collect a number of topics bandied about in the rural districts, of which urbanists are almost unaware. In setting these down, I do not for a moment suggest that the way they are stated here is at all the way in which they are discussed. The cumulative effect of these topics should be interpreted in the nature of an obituary, and in no sense as a plea for legislation.

Two classic pronouncements form a fitting prelude to what follows:

Agriculture bears promise of providing an ideal medium and environment for the high-

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est type of living, but this promise has scarcely anywhere in this country been ever approximately realized. (The Business Men's Commission on Agriculture, being a commission appointed by The National Industrial Conference Board, 1925–26.)

The farmer is the only man in the world who can lose money every year, educate his children, live well, and die rich. (Dr. Hibbard of Wisconsin University.)

I must comment on the second that it has always puzzled me whether the learned doctor meant the last word to pertain to money or to a state of mind.

HENRY FORD'S operations upon a big farm holding in Michigan demonstrate to his satisfaction that less than twenty-five days of actual agricultural activity suffice to plant, tend and harvest the common farm crops. Speaking generally, then, the balance of the year is spent by the Eastern farmer in producing milk. Judged by actual returns to milk farmers as a class, it is the costliest commodity which the farm produces. So many accessories and overheads are required, Mr. Ford points out, that milk ought to be given over to mass production. By which plan the farmer can be given a chance to live better and work less.

Since 1920, at least, the average income for all farms has run less than three per cent on investment, states the Department of Agriculture. And that is figured on wages, for the farmer himself, of about half the $2,200 per year estimated by the Department of Labor as a minimum for a "decent" standard of living for families of four. This startling three per cent covers the country as a whole. East of the Ohio the average falls well below that, until for a majority of farm owners it drops into the red. Surely, taking into account the amount of investment necessary for a 100-acre farm to function at all — what with teams, cows, mowing and milking machines, rakes, plows, harrows, planters, silos, barns, fences and the like; and considering the huge element of risk both in the farmer's health and the vagaries of nature he has to meet — no business is more insecure and none yields so little economic return. It might be surmised that the kind of farming operations attempted (I speak always of the Northeast) is perhaps fundamentally wrong, however sound it may have been during the last century. Mr. Ford's assurance is hardly needed.

EASY to point out that two forms of coöperation — that of cooperative investment and that of cooperative marketing — would go far to help the situation. But the present day 1860 type farmer will not, can not, coöperate. Help for these must come from State, county or private capitalism. Not, mind you, that enlightened and determined farmers might not finance such radical ventures, but that the enlightened and determined psychology simply does not exist among the present incumbents of the farms.

Labor saving and time saving machinery in greater variety finds its way yearly to the farm, but what does the farmer do with the time thus saved? He has tasted blood; he has eaten of the fleshpots of city life; and when the main routine tasks of farming have been accomplished, the lure of the motor car, the radio and the movie draws him from the tire-

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some and difficult minor jobs of upkeep which his ancestors did not neglect and which in the long run are absolutely necessary to the continuance of production. He fails to keep his brush cut along the fences; he neglects the fences themselves as long as possible; he allows his soil to deteriorate and his barns to go paintless, roofless and sidingless. Any critical survey along the country roads of the Northeast will bear me out. It is a commonplace of small town gossip. The 1930 farmer will not work as hard as his fathers; he is content to live off the annual drain of his capital investment and not take concern over the future.

Why should he? He is entitled to more fun than his parents got. But to get amusement safely he must move toward shorter hours and larger income. Which means certain radical readjustments which he appears to be unable to make.

With the death of most present-day farmers, there will be no sons and daughters to carry on. When the "old man" dies, the farm is commonly deserted, or is bought up by a chicken-haunted retirer from town who knows nothing of the toil of 100-acre upkeep and who lets the place go three-fourths back into nature's arms. In one small area not 80 miles from New York (yet well beyond suburban influence) there are ten once lusty farms which, after being on the market for years, have ceased to be farms at all, simply because there are no successors to the families who a generation ago "made them pay." In this particular area deer are taking up their haunts. Bobcats, beaver and even black bears, are becoming not uncommon again. Opossums are taking up their abode in "the new wilderness." The countryside is fast reverting to the state it was in a century ago. In certain districts near the Catskills and the Green Mountains, miles of stone walls can be traced through timber over a foot in diameter; roads are mere wood-trails; empty cellar holes mark the sites of farm houses which have disappeared these fifty years. Only seven years of passive resistance to nature suffice to turn good pastures into thicket. (I know, for I have ten neglected acres of it, myself.)

Is "the new wilderness" coming back? Obviously it is. Despite the auto and its roads — perchance obliquely because of it — the back country seems annually to move further "back" and closer up. Significant is it that every New England State except Maine has set its hand to a definite and extensive reforesting policy. A cycle of pioneerdom has nearly closed its arc.

Diversified farming of the New England type, while it depends on milk as its main product, leans also on poultry, pigs, potatoes, apples, oats and buckwheat. Notice a few flies in the farmer's unguent: during 1928 potatoes sold wholesale in Eastern markets at the lowest price for 62 years. Throughout the winter of 1929–30 eggs reached the lowest wholesale figure in over a decade. Turkeys were so cheap last Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year that dressed chickens could hardly be sold in competition.

Milk can be produced so much cheaper in Wisconsin that only the

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benevolent protectorate of New York City's bureaucracy keeps most of it out of the metropolis and allows the milk-shed within 300 miles a chance to sell at a price to yield a profit. Milk from Wisconsin can be and has been shipped in glass-lined tank cars as far as Jacksonville, Florida. A threat against higher milk returns to Eastern farmers lies always dormant in these facts.

HAY, once a major crop, now can hardly be sold at all in this motor age. Corn also, once an export crop, is now, as *stalks*, almost exclusively grown for winter cattle feed. Farmers and near-the-city truck gardeners sold cabbage at 25 cents a barrel during 1928! For the past several years it has not paid Easterners to pick their eating apples, not to mention buying barrels to ship them in. Insect enemies of fruit have of late years so multiplied that salable crops simply can not be produced without extensive spraying and other attentions unknown a generation ago. Two chick diseases have become so general that a constant fight must be waged to raise a fair percentage of them to adolescence. Another thing which has not slipped past some rural debaters is that in 1923 and 1926 we actually imported more agricultural products than we exported, and in 1927 imports and exports virtually balanced! A queer change for a nation of "embattled farmers!"

Four reasons account mainly for present conditions: (1) the invasion of products from Western farms where it is easier to raise them. Perfected transport facilities have greatly aided this; (2) specialized egg and poultry plants — particularly those further south where winter conditions are less rigorous; (3) fruit-raising on the Pacific Coast — another specialized industry; (4) the power of the "middleman's" capital.

The last obstacle is such that while it operates to keep retail prices up, it keeps prices low to the producer. Middlemen are "the neck of the bottle." Mergers and agreements enable these combinations of capital to buy always in a buyer's market. In an era when practically every business is merging and remerging, the unorganized farmer does nothing of the sort and looks dumbly on while commission houses, storage plants and wholesalers do about as they like with the perishable offerings from the soil. There is what amounts to a concerted conspiracy against lowering retail food prices in general, despite constant over-production. The high-cost-of-distribution is a two-edged sword that strangely enough can not cut the high-cost-of-living!

EVEN as he can not bring himself to organize or communize, neither can our 1860 type farmer specialize. Speaking broadly, it is not in him; he does not know how, nor dares he experiment. In an era of specialization he rests his case on diversity — and milk. His field and his fields are both too wide. Truck-growers near city markets put it all over him in raising vegetables and fruits; potatoes from Florida, the Southwest and lower Jersey beat his all hollow; meat from the Middle West monopolizes his former outlets for pork, veal and mutton. With the

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actual per capita production of a worker in agriculture four times what it was at 1840, the number of farmers is still too great. Over-production is down at the bottom the broken mainspring of Uncle Samuel's clock.

From 1919 to 1927 four million persons quit farming, nineteen million acres went out of cultivation, 76,000 farms ceased to exist as farms. *And agricultural products increased 25 per cent!* (From *Too Many Farmers* by Wheeler McMillan.)

Twenty-five per cent *more* hogs in 1928 than in 1926 brought $140,000,000 less to the farmers.

Truly, as the Four Minute Men pleaded back in 1919, our farmers have "produced, produced, produced — until it hurts."

OF COURSE, this pressure forcing the rugged individualist of the farm into the peasant class from which he once came, can not go on forever. Not in the sense that city folks can go on indefinitely buying automobiles, radios, structural steel, rayon and cosmetics from one another, to the neglect of the primary sources of supply; but in the sense that urban needs will express themselves as demands upon the specialist and not upon the steadfast 1860 vintage farmer. The city after all merely handles and consumes what the farmer, miner, fisherman and lumberjack send in, and can not force these primary producers into bankruptcy without killing its golden-egg goose. The point is that the farmer still considers himself a golden-egged goose, while in point of fact he is another sort of gander entirely. The near future must know the farmer as specialist or as communist.

A farm can go on running down on its own momentum longer than any business on earth. Its commodities come out of the earth and to a large extent replacement of them calls simply for "letting nature take its course." A bit more mortgage here, a bit of unreplaced depreciation there, can carry a family along on a steadily lowering standard for years. The handwriting on the stone walls is too plain: since the Great War *per capita* income of all citizens has increased 20 per cent (at any rate, since January 1, 1921); but farm values in every State, save two where retiring urbanites are buying gentlemanly farms, have actually declined. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics (Department of Labor) reports a country-wide drop in farm values in 1929 over 1928 of two per cent. Compared to an index figure of 100 based on farm value averages 1912–14, today, as of March 1, 1930, these values are 115, having steadily declined since 1920. Correcting these figures in terms of the 1930 dollar, the Department of Agriculture says that farm values are *twenty per cent below* where they were in 1912! To spot-light the status of the farmer still clearer, the report continues:

The purchasing power of farm products in 1928 gives an index-figure of 90 as over against 100 for the period 1910–14. In 1921 the figure was 75.

Taxes during 1928 cost the farmer two and a half times the pre-war level. His labor costs are 170 per cent higher.

CERTAIN temporary stop-gaps have staved off the peasantry trend here and there. Such, for example, as keeping summer boarders. Now we are told that the auto, making vacationers itinerant rather than sessile; and the so-called Prohibition Act

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seducing them to Canada, to Europe and to tolerant summer camps, have completely skimmed the butter-fat from enterprising city sojourners. Although the said Prohibition Experiment has enabled the orchardist to sell his gnarly cider-apples, and to plant and dress new grape vines, these items are but a drop in the jug. Filling-stations and road-stands are boons to those near traffic lines.

TOWN banks are becoming more cautious each season about extending mortgage loans on farms, knowing that if forced to foreclose, buyers of such places are few and far. This tightness amounted to a scandalous injustice during the financial fever of 1929, and in 1930 the difficulties so many banks suffered in the market crash have set them against any but lively-looking loans. Farm mortgages thirty years ago were preferred investments — today, well the Federal Government is trying to figure out ways of extending credits and loans because local banks won't risk them. Watch Mr. Legge's committee try to do something real for farm relief: right at a time when the Hawley tariff is a step in the opposite direction!

Did you, you 70 per cent of America who get your living off city bounty, ever try to do actual farm work? Yourself, I mean, and not by hiring some horny-handed tenant or recent immigrant? Until you perform some of this rural toil for six months you can not possibly realize how exhausting, how discouraging it is. To keep up a 100-acre farm, not to speak of the daily and yearly incidentals that crop up, requires the physical fitness of a football athlete. I mean, to do it thoroughly and consistently. You arise daily at dawn and have no overnight vacations. You must be "in condition" practically every day in the year. Proper care of teeth and a doctor's attention when it is needed are luxuries relatively few farmers can afford. A man's vigor is bound to become somewhat curtailed after age 40, but you must go on — if you are a typical farmer of the Northeast. No other occupation but day-laboring demands such personal participation. With farm-hand help almost at the vanishing point as it is today, you and your family circle must keep on working — or sell out. And to whom will you sell out?

YOU too would let your fence-rows widen with every spring and the locust, ash, maple and hazel saplings choke the hayfields a little here, a little there. Would you rather let the blackberry briars and the thorn-apple bushes go another week so that you could motor over to the Joneses or listen to the broadcasting or see that new picture at the village movie theatre? You would. The eastern farmer likes these diversions, too. (Confound his shiftless hide!)

You and your family circle. It probably numbers three beside yourself. In granddaddy's day it enclosed from four to eight sturdy sons; in those days communal, coöperative farming was actually done. Today whenever you encounter a farm that looks prosperous, it is silk-hose to 28-cent eggs that two or more boys and perhaps as many girls are helping the old folks run the place. Herein lies a broad hint. American farming, 1860 type, north of the Mason and

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Dixon Line and east of the Lakes-to-the-Gulf Waterway, must soon become communal, either within said family circle or among neighbors, or Russia will be selling us wheat and potatoes before 1950. Or else — there is an else — 1860 type farming must become a 1930 business.

Concluding this chiaroscuro monotint, may a friend inquire of any dirt-farmers who have read thus far and who are producing milk, to answer me this question: Knowing the ease and certainty by which motors can take workers about the countryside; and assuming that there is no biological reason (and science says there isn't) why cows may not be milked at any hour; why may not one conveniently central set of barns shelter a half-dozen herds (to be milked in rotation), and a surrounding large acreage provide pasture and ensilage for 300 or more cows?

THEREFORE, why may not fifteen freemen and electors from fifteen neighboring homesteads, each citizen working not more than nine hours daily, come thither by motor and pool both their labor and their machines — and still remain freemen and electors with American-sized incomes? Ah, you tell me that the answer lies in "the American tradition." But I say unto you, brothers, that your demise as solvent beings lies in that "American tradition!" When will eastern farmers learn the benefits of merging?

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# My Work on the Bowery

By Marian Spore

*One Woman's Efforts to Help the Down-and-Out*

My first introduction to the Bowery was at its worst. It was freezing cold and the derelicts of misspent humanity which I later found to be so large a part of its floating population were huddled in doorways.

I had read in the paper that morning of two men freezing to death down there the day before. I felt, as all of us feel, the horror of such conditions. I am no better than others who read the same story, but I felt an urge to see if I could not do a little.

I did not know where the Bowery was, so asked a policeman how to get there. He directed me, and after changing a twenty dollar bill into eighty quarters I started downtown. My little fund soon vanished and I came home with a picture of haggard faces, shambling figures and hunger in a city of warm homes filled with well-fed people. It was a problem beyond me. I can not solve it or suggest a solution. It is the endless problem of discouraged poverty to be found in every great city. It is to be noticed everywhere, but at its worst in the cold cities of the Northern States when the end of construction work drives men into the city slums to hibernate until the opening of spring.

The Bowery may be worse than the corresponding sections in other cities. I do not know. I think it is, for New York is our largest city and there is at all seasons a mass of crippled, aged and worthless humanity, to which winter adds the seasonal worker out of a job.

I use the words "worthless humanity" because I am not blind to the fact that many of those in the Bowery cesspool are there because their own excess has brought them to a point where their lives are worth little even to themselves. Yet they are human beings and cold and hungry. Perhaps the excesses which have been their undoing are partly due to institutions and laws for which we are all to some extent responsible. I shall not attempt percentages for I have heard many, mostly different, but I am sure that the larger part of the driftwood I have encountered is American born. There are few Italians and almost no Jews. The bulk are American and Irish. There is a fair percentage of real workers out of a job, who come and go; but the class making the

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greatest appeal to me is composed of old men and cripples.

There are many of these; beginning with men just beyond the age when they are wanted, and others slightly crippled and extending to the really old men and those badly crippled, whom nobody wants and who have nothing to look forward to except cold, hunger and the end.

I MADE up my mind very soon that the mere handing out of small sums of money was doing little good. I also decided that it must be left to wiser heads than mine to find a solution. I determined that if I was to do anything worth while I must accept the situation as I found it and limit my efforts to such direct and simple relief as I could carry on without any overhead expense. I wanted my effort to be real and the money I spent to go directly to someone who was suffering. I know that in organized charity investigation is necessary, but investigation costs time and money.

I decided to trust to my instinct when men came face to face with me and risk being imposed upon sometimes. Meal tickets I gave to any one, but more to the old, sick and crippled. When several thousand men stood in line waiting from two to four hours, it was enough proof to me that they were hungry.

That part of the work was simple to organize, once I began to understand what I wanted to do. There are many agencies doing fine work along the Bowery, but for my purpose I determined the Bowery Y. M. C. A. was the best. They maintain an efficient and clean cafeteria serving food to the down-and-outs. Ten cents will buy a plate of meat and potatoes; five cents a big bowl of soup or an equally large bowl of coffee and three slices of bread. It was good food at cost, so I bought my meal tickets there.

Then I found a quiet corner and the men did the rest. I did not have to advertise for customers. They came from all directions. Not in a rush but by one or two or three — shuffling, shabby figures with discouraged faces. Business was good from the very first, and the small groups soon formed a long line. In the beginning, I gave only meal tickets, and the "line" soon grew so that I needed help to keep it in order. I asked for a policeman and I can not say too much in praise of the help the police have given me — both individually and as an organization. When the line grew the number of officers was increased, until for the last two years, with from three to five thousand men to keep in order and moving, I have had a sergeant and from ten to fifteen officers.

THEN the ill-clad figures and broken shoes suggested still another form of relief within my power. I began with shoes, giving to those who were most desperately in need little red cardboard tickets which I cut out at home. These tickets entitled the holders to shoes when presented at a distribution station which I arranged for at the Bowery Y. M. C. A. It was all very primitive but it worked and there was no overhead. I bought the shoes wholesale, the Y. M. C. A. gave me the room, and I distributed them myself with the aid of a young man from the "Y"

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and a policeman. A little later I cut out some green cardboard tickets and gave them to those in the line most in need of clothing. I distributed the latter in much the same way as the shoes, although at a different time. As the work grew I hired the ground floor of an old house at No. 24 East Third Street, for the purpose of holding my stock of shoes and clothing and as a distribution centre. The building was owned by the "Y," which gave the space I used for a nominal rent because of the interest in my work.

THIS sounds to me like just the kind of a story I said I would not write — a personal history. My little effort is financed by friends whose names I am pledged not to reveal, and publicity means only a flood of appeals which I must put resolutely aside, because no matter how deserving, they are outside of my work. I have consented to write a story much against my will, in an effort to attract attention to the problem, in the hope that some progress can be made toward finding a solution. It is beyond me. I can only go on trying to give a little relief in a simple, homespun way, making many mistakes, no doubt, but giving to those helped a large percentage of the money my friends supply for the work.

It has two more sides in addition to the "line" for meal tickets, shoes and clothing. One of them consists of special cases of men who have been crippled. These I attend to at odd moments. Many are very sad. I usually pick them out of the line, but some are brought to my attention by the policemen who patrol the Bowery and who get to know the deserving cases. They are many and varied — consisting of those in need of artificial legs, eye glasses, trusses, etc.

I remember a cook who obtained a position in a country hotel as soon as he had been fitted with a workable artificial leg. Another remarkably intelligent man of fine face had been longing for a wheel chair or conveyance of some sort in which to take an airing. He had been partly paralyzed by an accident at the Navy Yard, and for six years had been unable to get out of the "Y" where he lived. He had catalogues of every kind of wheel chair but no money. His face was ashen white from long inactivity indoors. I bought him a four-wheeled contrivance costing, after all charity discounts, about $125, and last summer he travelled down to the waterfront of the East Side to watch the ships loading and unloading. When I saw him in the fall he looked — except for his paralysis, which is incurable — healthy, tanned and certainly happier.

THERE have been many cases of men who were helpless because of broken glasses, others who could not get work until they were presentable with new teeth; and I suppose I should include among these special cases those I send back to their homes. Such cases always seem to me to be about the only ones where I reach a definite end. The derelicts of the Bowery consist of every kind of discouraged mankind. Most of them are there through their own fault, I admit. There are many, however, driven to such extremity by illness or really hard luck. Then there are a few who do not belong on the

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Bowery at all — men who have friends or relatives able to take care of them but no money with which to reach them. When I find such a case I ask the names of the friends and their addresses, and I correspond with them to be sure the story is true. If it checks, I buy my protégé a ticket and feel I have at least taken one man away from the misery and hunger of the Bowery life.

THERE was one little, bright eyed, gray haired Scot about seventy-five, who had been in America twenty-two years. He was a most self-respecting looking man, but nobody seemed to want him. I learned his story; yet it took some time to hear from his friends and secure his passport. I kept him meanwhile in a Bowery hotel. Finally, when all was clear, I bought him a ticket to his old home country and sent him to the steamer with what he called his "wee satchel" filled with clean shirts and underwear. When I said goodbye to him, he asked if he might have a dollar to keep in his pocket till he landed. A young man who sometimes helped me took him aboard the boat and just before he sailed handed him $25. We felt that we owed that to the honor of America after twenty-two years. The old man danced a Highland fling on deck and sailed away to his home and, I hope, happiness.

Then there were a miner from Montana, a mechanic from a Southern State, a man from New England just out of the hospital and unfit to work, and many others. The story is too long to tell, but the last case reminds me of the one remaining branch of my work which I have not described. It consists of finding temporary lodging and food for the ill. Most of such cases are men discharged from the hospitals as cured but not well enough to fight life along the Bowery. They are usually pale and thin but would be on the road to health if given a little time. I see many such cases — too well to be kept in a hospital where every bed is needed, and too ill to get a job. The best I can do is to put them in a Bowery hotel with some tickets for their meals. This is not much, for few of the Bowery hotels can be free from vermin, but it is better than "camping the Banner," which is the Bowery term for walking the streets all night. I have seen many pairs of feet so swollen from that kind of promenading that they could not get on the new shoes which I gave to them.

YOU who read this may think my work is poorly planned and ineffective. Some even say it makes paupers. Perhaps it does; but behind all the vice and failure and lack of courage which have brought men to the Bowery, I see human suffering and perhaps some failure on the part of our civilization. I do not ask for help of any kind. My friends furnish the money and I prefer to oversee the work alone, for I find that the volunteer worker soon fades away. I do not want publicity, because it only adds to my troubles. I merely want people to think about the problem in the hope that wisdom somewhere may find at least a partial solution.

I shall not criticize anyone, for all have been most kind to me. I can not say too much of the help which Captain Hummil of the Bowery police station and his men have

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given to me, or of the splendid coöperation which I have received from the officials of the Bowery Y. M. C. A. I have worked most closely with the "Y," but the Salvation Army and many other organizations are doing admirable work.

I SHALL make only one suggestion. It is that consideration be given to the establishment of a clearing convalescent home somewhere on cheap property in an outlying section of the city. I realize that the hospitals with their expensive locations, their buildings and equipment designed for emergency work, and their staffs of medical men and nurses, can not undertake more than putting a patient on his feet. But, aside from the human side, is it good business to send out an unfinished product? The manufacturer who does that either fails or spends a lot of money in repairs. Many of the men I have seen discharged from the hospitals with no homes to go to are unfinished products and are soon back for repairs. Thin and pale as they are, with neither money nor warm clothes; it seems to me (from my viewpoint of great ignorance of hospital work) it would be good business to put them a little more securely on the road to health before discharging into the streets of winter New York.

I HAVE been told many tales against the British system of doles for the unemployed, that it pauperizes the people and breeds laziness. I do not know whether the system has merit or not, but at least it is an effort to meet a situation very much more serious over there than in the United States. It may have all the bad points its critics charge, but if I understand its purpose it gives, from that part of society which has a job to that part of society which is out of work, a daily pittance designed to be enough to keep soul and body together and not enough to encourage thriftlessness. It may be wrong, but it is an attempt to find a solution.

Are we really attempting to find one? Despite our municipal lodging houses, our splendid private charities, are we really facing the problem of the down-and-out whom nobody wants? Are we hiding our heads in the sand like ostriches? I wonder; and until I know, I am going to keep on in my own little way.

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# Stuff and Nonsense

By Donald Rose

*A Monthly Magazine of No Importance, Dealing Lightly with Matters Pertinent and Profound, and Weightily with Those of No Consequence Whatever*

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## THE ANTIDOTE TO EDUCATION

It demands a degree of courage approaching impudence to put in a plea for the family, in these days of emancipation from everything except the high cost of living. For the family is become an incident to a new mode of living, a tradition more honored in the breach than the observance, and an admittedly desirable institution which nobody wants. The essentials of family life, which seemed so safe and reliable a generation or two ago, occupy in many modern households a place of importance about equal to that of the can-opener or the coal shovel. The traditions of the family are challenged and questioned — even despised by gentlemen like Bertrand Russell. The best that can be said for them by those who feel compelled to say something, is that they are a useful working hypothesis until somebody invents a better.

And yet there must be some good in the family and in family life, or it would not have survived so many restless centuries. It must have other than biological excuses, or else it would fall apart without so much pushing. It may be, in fact, that even the Russian Soviets may discover some day that you can not unscramble the experience of humanity by a decree which makes a man's own children none of his business. It may be that the American doctors, dentists, educators, sociologists and efficiency experts who are moving warily but persistently in the same direction may some day find the door shut in their faces. And if not, then some day every comprehensive museum will contain a touching tableau entitled "American Family of Early Twentieth Century at Breakfast," or a beautiful, old-fashioned picture of "Father and Son in Woodshed," in memory of the vanished past.

But it does not do to defend an institution by disliking its substitutes. A positive case of sorts must be made for the family, or we may as well put the children out to graze at boarding school, and move into a tabloid apart-

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ment, where we may spend our declining years in declining invitations to other apartments like our own, and wondering where to swing a cat if we had a cat. Custom, tradition and economic necessity no longer bind us fast, so we must find other excuses for our chains or quit wearing them.

IT IS not very long since somebody discovered that education is the cure for everything that ails humanity, which is plenty. It was later still that a few pessimists began to suspect that the cure might be more dangerous than the disease, or that at least the symptoms of disorder were uncommonly and unaccountably plentiful in a world which was supposed to be getting better with every high school graduation and collegiate commencement. This nation has now the maximum density of education throughout the world; it has also the highest homicide rate, the greatest prison population, the worst record for insanity, and an unquestioned supremacy among civilized peoples for unjustifiable suicide.

We won't blame all that on education. It may be partly the result of the weather or the newspapers or tight shoes or canned salmon or some of the other advantages of civilization. But while education claims so much, it must be blamed for something. Or else we must all bear the blame for taking an overdose of education and allowing it to upset our spiritual and mental digestions.

The impartial conclusion from the evidence is that education needs an antidote to prevent its becoming positively unwholesome. But it is demonstrable that the insidious advantages of education overtake us gradually, line upon line and precept upon precept, until the triumphant day when the graduate seizes his diploma and shouts "Educated, by gosh!" to the astonished world. By which time it is practically too late to do anything about him.

So whatever is to be done to compensate for education must be done on the way, by some institution that is at least as patient and persistent as the average faculty. At the moment, nothing seems to fill the bill but the family. Unless the family can supply the needful antidote to education, there isn't any.

How should it go about it? Well, it should certainly begin early. When the kindergarten kiddies trot off to their labors, only the watchfulness of mother and the obstinacy of father can protect them against the absurd assumption of school teachers that it is important how much time they spend in the schoolroom. It isn't important, of course, and only teachers think that it is. But the teachers will get away with it, unless the family stoutly defends the child's right to play against the persistent intention of pedagogues that he shall go to work.

THE family responsibility increases as he mounts the elementary grades. For in them he is carefully instructed to look at everything a little cross-eyed, and incidentally learns a lot of things that aren't so. He is infected with the platitudes of patriotism and with a sentimental estimate of greatness and goodness. He learns little of character but a great deal of conduct. He gets a false idea of the importance of such silly things as arithmetic and syntax and the geography of the Malay archipelago, and an equally absurd idea that these things are only good to get high marks with. He is made to read of matters that don't interest him and to write of matters that don't concern him. He lives for hours every day in a miniature world which is only a mockery of the real one.

But all this won't hurt him and may do him perpetual good if he comes home regularly to a reasonable family life. A reasonable family is one whose habits, conversations and occupations contradict all the artificiality of the schoolroom. Its adult members are busy at real

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work and seem to like it. They have opinions and change them without anguish. They are skeptical enough to get around safely, and hope their children will some day be able to do the same. They talk freely in the hearing of young ears, because they want young heads to think freely. They are not the enemies of the school teachers, nor are they their spineless allies. They are their antidote.

THE high school boys and girls are in somewhat different case, but still need to be kept in equilibrium between faculty and family. At school they are being stuffed like young geese with the chestnuts of the curriculum. They can never digest them unaided, and the teachers have no time to help them to complete assimilation. In the living laboratory of home and family, the stuff of textbooks can be made over into the staff of life, in the company of those who know something of what life is all about. Knowledge can there be called to account for its usefulness; enthusiasm can be directed to things worth while. Above all, the spiritual elements which education avoids as though they were poisonous must be added to the diet of youth at home, or it will spend its life looking for them.

The family takes a long chance when it sends its boys and girls away to college. They are nearly past the point where parents can tell them anything, but their moral condition is just ripe for whatever youth and opportunity may suggest. They will need the antidote of family at such a time for many things; for their fancied freedom, for the arrogance of specialized knowledge, for the impudence of skepticism and the infection of cheap company.

Unless humor and honesty and the sense of proportion are youth's companions, education can do it a lot of damage. Unless frank discussion, sensible conversation and a living philosophy offset the inevitable autocracy of the educators, boys and girls can do no other than grow up as stupid as their elders. These things were once in the keeping of the family, which is a good reason for retaining the family. There are probably others also, if we could think of them.

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## THE ORIGIN OF EVERYTHING

Ever since science and the popular imagination were overtaken with anxiety about the origin of life, the blame has been variously placed on all sorts of accident and design. Until recently the problem was admittedly unsolved. But on June 6, there appeared an editorial on "Loveless Matings" in *The New York American*, which is a Hearst newspaper with more headlines than seems possible. Its final paragraph ran as follows:

> Conjugal harmony doesn't come from test tubes. It is another name for love, which has created the human race for countless years, or ever since man first crawled, an amœba, from the primeval ooze of H. G. Wells.

THE blame is fixed at last. It lies with Mr. Wells, who is not the "Wells of English pure and undefiled" but a couple of other fellows, one of them a tolerable novelist and the other an intolerable historian. Out of his ooze, it seems, came humanity and all its blunders, all its bad manners, all its preposterous performances. Had Mr. Wells oozed a little less or with better judgment, the world today would not be in such a state that he must spend his latter years in righting it. When Mr. Wells writes of Utopia, of the millennium, and of the superman whom he so obviously prefers to his present neighbors, he is betraying a belated mood of repentance. Once upon a time he oozed too much and too carelessly. Possibly, for that matter, he is still oozing.

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## The Ordeal by Water

To an impartial and uninformed observer from another planet it would possibly appear that Americans go on vacations principally in order to get poison ivy, ptomaine poisoning and sunburn, to fall off mountains and be run over by automobiles, and to be drowned in lake, river and ocean. The summer week-end is demonstrably as deadly as a fair-sized war among the backward nations, who have not yet achieved the civilized triumph of wholesale extermination of themselves and their neighbors. And it seems that something should be done about it.

Prevention is notoriously better than cure, but the only apparent way to prevent these vacation casualties is to pass a Constitutional amendment against them, which will take time. In default thereof, some practical instruction in rescue work seems necessary and seasonable, particularly for the resuscitation of the drowned.

The degree to which this is important depends principally upon who is drowned, where, and how much. If you yourself are drowned, for instance, you may find it a matter of the utmost interest, whereas if it is a Chinaman on the coast of Korea you may be able to dissemble your concern or at least view the situation philosophically. But drowning is distinctly a social function, involving not only the principal performer but most of the bystanders, both innocent and otherwise, and it is well to be prepared to take your part with distinction and understanding.

Assuming that someone has been drowned, either by accident or design, the first thing to be determined is the exact degree of drownedness involved. A person who has been drowned, let us say, for three weeks, presents a very poor subject for experiment or demonstration, and having been so long in the water is probably inclined to shrink from further contact with the material world. Concerning a freshly drowned specimen, however, you should never give up hope, even though the principally interested party may already have done so.

The first thing to do is to remove the victim from the water; the second is to remove the water from the victim. If the accident has occurred in a public swimming pool, the water should be carefully poured back, since it belongs to the community and is paid for by the taxes of the citizens. Otherwise it may be removed in buckets and stored until needed again. The bailing process should be continued until the victim gives forth under percussion a distinctly hollow and resonant tone, similar to that of a ripe watermelon.

At this point the subject may begin to take interest and insist on sitting up, which cuts off the most entertaining part of the proceedings and should be discouraged. A sharp blow in the head with a stomach pump will usually render him amenable to reason and pave the way for artificial respiration.

A properly drowned person has lost all interest in breathing, as also in such fascinating subjects as international disarmament and amateur theatricals, and artificial respiration is intended to inflate him again to the proper pressure. This may be done with an ordinary bicycle pump, but a more spectacular treatment is to exercise the patient like an old-style fire engine and pump his arms up and down until he shows signs of objecting. When he begins to ask for stimulants, the crowd should be dispersed by the police, and a call sent out for a Saint Bernard dog carrying an emergency ration of good whiskey. If you can't get a dog, ask a policeman.

When the patient is finally revived, care should be taken not to offer him a glass of water. In his weakened condition he may not be altogether reasonable, and may possibly resent it.

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## Poems in Praise of Practically Anybody

### *My Summer Girl*

I welcome summer gladly
With poetic exultation,
For the winter weather sadly
Interrupts my inspiration;
Observation has reported
And experience has told,
That the muse may not be courted
When her little feet are cold.

When the summer sun is smiling
And the air is warm and gentle,
She is graceful and beguiling,
And distinctly ornamental.
But when the winter breezes
Make her nose and tonsils red,
She simply sits and sneezes,
And she might as well be dead.

When the fair Olympian channels,
Are with winter's burden laden,
Then my muse in heavy flannels
Is a rather stupid maiden.
I love the lady dearly
As undoubtedly she knows;
But she's useless to me — nearly
When there's chilblains on her toes.

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### *The Bashful Suitor*

My sweetheart is a dainty girl
From slippered foot to shining curl;
A miracle of charming grace
And lovely, laughing face.
And, thinking of her, I can pay
Her homage in a graceful way,
But when I'm with her I become
Plain dumb!

With flashing wit and repartee
She baffles smarter men than me,
While at my leisure I devise
Appropriate replies.
But I admit that at the time
My conversation is a crime,
And stimulating as a dish
Of fish!

I have a little house in mind,
A license of the proper kind,
A handsome little diamond ring,
A church, and everything.
Though just at present, I admit
I've not got very far with it,
I still declare I'll win her yet,
You bet!

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### *Compensation*

I dare not guess the thoughts that come
and go,
Behind the laughing curtain of your eyes;
And yet, one happy verity I know,
Your kindly, gracious charm attests a
glow
Of crystal shining truth, that beautifies
A spirit sweet and wise.

Nor may a friend's devotion dare to trace
The joys inhabiting your heart's recess;
Yet sure I am your glowing girlhood
grace,
Writ in the smile illumining your face,
Springs from the beauty of your spirit's
dress,
All radiant loveliness.

You of my heart are gladly unaware,
Nor care what lights and shadows there
abide;
Yet your warm kindliness has kindled
there,
A vision pure, and marvellously fair;
A gift you have not given, yet not
denied;
But it is mine, and I am satisfied.

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### *The Excess of Perfection*

My lady, tailored for the street,
Is quite perfection, head to feet;
Correctly chic, supremely neat;
Dame fashion bows before her.
How may I hope to find a heart
In trappings so absurdly smart
Why should I love a work of art
And yet — I still adore her.

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In evening glory, doubly fair,
She paints the lily, I'm aware;
And skilful hands have made her hair
A golden crown above her.
Her dainty gowns a skin reveal
So smooth and white — I sometimes feel
Such satin finish can't be real.
Yet, spite of all, I love her.

A drowning man will clutch a straw.
A misplaced hair, a single flaw
Would save my sinking heart. But, pshaw!
Why bother to discuss her?
Such perfect poise I can not stand.
Some day I'll lose my self-command;
I'll take her, shake her, kiss her, and
Just naturally *muss* her!

## HOW IT IS DONE

It is rather wonderful to contemplate the alleged comic journals that appear weekly, their pages full of merry quips and jests and japes, with pictures appropriate and to match. Wonderful — yes — and even depressing. The question arises as to how they do it. Knowing the appetite of the printed page, we personally marvel at the genius which contrives these weekly miracles, rendering them apparently acceptable to a humor-hungry public and filling them always to the brim.

In one case we have learned how it is done.

The make-up man is in the editorial sanctum. He is tearing his hair here and there. "Boss," says he, "page 24 ain't got a thing on it but a two-inch single-column picture. What'll I do?"

The editor takes his feet off the desk. "Bill, you're fired," says he. "It's your job to fill this magazine. I got troubles enough without that. You're fired."

"You can't fire me," says Bill. "You owe me for three weeks, and anyway, nobody never gave me nothing for page 24 except this here picture. What you want me to do — go down to a talkie show for some stuff?"

"Where's Bob Benchley?" says the editor.

"Oh, gosh, boss," says Bill earnestly. "We got plenty Bob Benchley in this number. What do you think this is — a one-man vaudeville act?"

"How big is the picture?" says the editor.

"Only two inches, so help me," says Bill.

"Make it four," says the boss, "and send in Corey Ford."

"Corey ain't showed up since he got his last check," says Bill. "And his last piece was turrible. Even *The Ladies' Home Journal* reprinted it, and nobody even kicked."

"How about half a dozen Dot Parker's verses?" says the boss, reaching vaguely into the desk. "Or some limericks. Or maybe a yard or two of college stuff."

"You ain't got any of Parker's stuff that is fit to print," says Bill. "You said so last week. And we can't run college stuff until we get more coonskin cuts."

"Make the picture half a page," says the boss. "And stick in this John Held sketch. It just came in."

"Looks just like the last one," says Bill gloomily. "They all do. Ain't you got no jokes?"

"None that come within the Statute of Limitations," says the editor. "Better make the picture three-quarters page and fill up with some of my stuff. You got lots of it."

"Aw, chief, don't say that," pleads Bill miserably. "I got some feelings left for the public and you know you ain't got a mortgage on this here magazine. And then there's your wife and children — it's them that pays, you know. Give me something good."

"Oh, thunder," says the editor. "Make the picture full page. That'll fix it."

"So it will," says Bill admiringly. "And much obliged. I knowed you could fix it if you put your mind to it."

And the magazine goes to press as usual.

## COST OF CULTURE

WHEN Dean Swift wrote of *The Battle of the Books* he was contemplating the trifling controversy between Classicism and Modernism, an argument which neither he nor anybody else has been able to settle. He might have written in more lively fashion had he foreseen that his title would some day serve for a fight between the book clubs and the drug stores as to which are the proper custodians of culture, and whether a book should sell for a dollar or as much as the traffic will bear.

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If the business of publishing were as well rooted in Wall Street as the oil industry or the manufacture of chewing gum, the purchasing public would never be puzzled and embarrassed by such differences of opinion as to what a book should cost. It is not quite decent, under the business code of the times, for the leaders of a major industry to admit that they don't know what the public wants, or how much the public should pay for it. If this sort of thing continues and spreads, we shall begin to doubt the stature of our supermen. We shall soon be suspecting that the rule of thumb has not yet been abandoned in business, and that there is not as much difference between a plumber and a captain of industry as we had supposed.

But having published a book of our own and enjoyed the acquaintance of a number of those who make merchandise of paper and print, we concede that publishing is an extraordinary trade with extraordinary troubles of its own. For the publisher is the middleman between the author and the reader, and suffers the usual fate of one who comes between assault and battery and its victim. Nobody really loves him, and he spends his time dodging the slings and arrows of fate and the contending parties. He doesn't know what the public wants, and is supposed to supply it in spite of the fact that he has no idea where to find it. He guesses wrong seven times in order to guess right once, and must pick the pockets of the ultimate consumer in retaliation for the gouging he gets from his own frail judgment. He must treat books as merchandise, which is bad for his soul, and he must treat authors as sausage machines, which is bad for the authors. The public he must treat as an appetite or a hole in the ground, and if he can fill it he can make money and buy himself a radio and quit reading.

The publisher has also more than his share of mechanical difficulties. His printing plant is a collection of all the principal sorts of machinery that are possessed of devils. These include linotypes, monotypes, presses, folders, binders and stitchers, all of which are malicious instruments, though it is the folding machine in which Satan principally dwells in his odd moments. Anyone who has seen a folding machine take a fair folio, printed all over with the wit and wisdom of man, and crumple and crease it and toss it on the floor, knows something of the perversity of inanimate objects and the special miseries of publishers.

But publishers also need books to publish, and to get them must wade waist deep in manuscripts for most of their waking hours. Nobody knows why one book is better than another, and still less knows why the public buys one book to send to Aunt Annie on her birthday and will not use another to prop up a broken davenport.

This sort of thing gets on the publisher's nerves. It is the strain of their business that has undoubtedly caused the present controversy among the publishers. Some of them are pinning their faith to the dollar bill and the ease with which it slides across a counter and into a cash register. They defend their price-cutting with the plea that it will enable the public to feast its fill on good literature and glut its cultural appetite with new books. The others doubt it, and argue in return that while the public is being improved by forcible feeding, the authors and publishers will be dying in heaps from under-nourishment. Which is right will be determined only when a suitable number of publishers have gone bankrupt or taken to some more reliable business, such as weather forecasting or horse racing.

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